



Generosity
Morality
Good Intentions
Personal Development
Future Development

Sunday Dhamma Talks

Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith

Abbot, Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammākāyāram

Volume **3**



Sunday Dhamma Talks

Volume 3

by

Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith

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We dedicate this book and any merit it may generate, along with all our efforts at Wat Luang Phor Sodh – The beautiful campus, the Abbot's teachings, Phra Mahā Cetiya Somdej, the International Retreats, the Thai Retreats, and the 24-hour Meditation Vihāra – to our beloved

Venerable Chao Khun Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni
Luang Phor Sodh Candasaro

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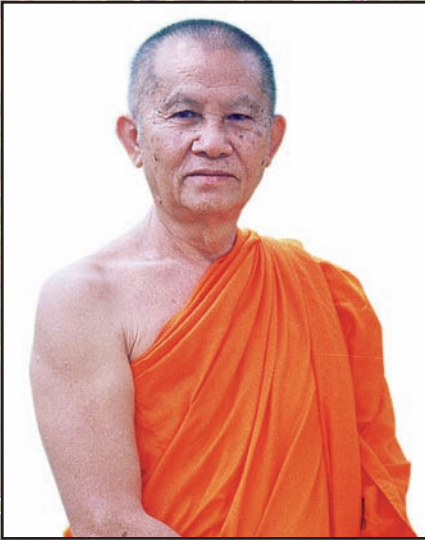
I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Phra Khru Baitika Dr. Barton Yanathiro for serving as interviewer during these broadcasts and as the editor of this volume. May he also share in reaping the benefits of any merit generated.

Finally, let me also express my deep gratitude to Phra Mahā Prasert Paññāseṭṭho and Phra Natpakanan Guṇaṅkaro of the Wat Luang Phor Sodh Publication's Office and to Phra Mahā Somchat and the Wat Luang Phor Sodh Audio-Visual Staff, as well as to my faithful Secretary Phra Mahā Chainipoj for their indispensable support in making this endeavor successful.

Phra Rajyanvisith

Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith

Abbot, Wat Luang Phor Sodh



Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith (Interviewee)
Abbot, Wat Luang Phor Sodh



Phra Khru Baitika Dr. Barton Yanathiro
Interviewer and Editor

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Hello. I'm Phra Bart – Phra Khru Baitika Dr. Barton Yanathiro – from the United States. In BE 2550 (CE 2007) the National Broadcasting System of Thailand invited Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith to initiate a series of Sunday Dhamma Talks in English on the first Sunday of each month. I served as the interviewer in the broadcasts and am the editor of this volume.

This is the third issue in a continuing series. Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith has an extremely impressive record, now well recognized from local through international levels. You will find that the broadcasts compiled here go far beyond the ordinary in both scholastic erudition and inspiration for meditation practice. This is an exceptional union of academic and transcendental knowledge, rarely available in English.

Volume One presented the first six months, July to December 2007. It began with an overview of Lord Buddha's teachings, and continued through the first of the three Higher Trainings (*Adhisikkhā*) which covers "Sīla" or Moral Behavior. Volume 2 covered the second six months, January to June 2008. It began by completing coverage of the Three Higher Trainings, and then turned to its primary focus on Lord Buddha's fundamental teachings on how to meditate, as presented in The "Greater Discourse on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness" (*Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta in the Dīgha Nikāya*).

Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith's careful attention to accurate translation from the original Pali plus his own extensive experience as a meditation master combined to rescue Lord Buddha's teachings from a handful of misinterpretations that are currently widespread and threatening to mislead both students of scripture and meditation practitioners; for example, the currently popular translation of "*Kāye Kāyānupassī Viharati*" as "contemplating the body as body" contains three misinterpretations which jointly obscure the original teaching and correct practice almost completely.

Beginning with the Four Foundations of Mindfulness in the tenth broadcast, each presentation also included a brief meditation experience, encouraging the listener to

“See for himself or herself.” Thus, Volume Two both elucidated and encouraged practice of Lord Buddha’s most fundamental teachings on meditation.

This Volume, which is the third in the series, covers July through December of 2008 (BE 2551). Having brought listeners quite far in the first year of broadcasts – from the story of Lord Buddha’s Enlightenment through the Four Foundations of Mindfulness meditation – Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith felt it was time for “a return to basics.” This volume is devoted entirely to Lord Buddha’s simplest, but most crucially important precept: **Do Good!**

Chapter Two begins with *Dāna* or selfless generosity – giving with personal sacrifice and considerate thoughtfulness. Such behavior exhibits both altruistic kindness and triumph over selfish desires. It reflects the essence of Divine Abode mentality (*Brahma Vihāra*) – Loving Kindness (*Mettā*), Compassion (*Karuṇā*), Sympathetic Joy (*Muditā*) and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*) – which underlies all moral behavior.

Chapters Three and Four review the Five Precepts – Don’t kill, steal, commit adultery, use improper speech, or take intoxicants. Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith brings home the message with force, by detailing both the immediate personal, family and social costs of improper behavior and the horrific punishments in store in future lifetimes.

Chapter Five covers Good Intentions – mental states counteracting the three root causes of defilements, greed, hatred, and delusion. Chapter Six considers “Personal Development” in this present lifetime through improving one’s own behavior and mental processes. Finally, Chapter Seven talks about Future Development – the virtues that lead to profitable rebirths in future lifetimes. So, in conclusion, this entire issue is devoted to the most basic teaching of this and all other religions: **Do Good!** Nothing else in life is more important. **Do Good – Get Good. Do Evil get Get Evil!**

Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith

Now, I would like to introduce Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith for those who are not yet familiar with him. He is the Abbot of Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakāyārām in Damnoen Saduak District of Rajburi Province, and one of Thailand’s most eminent Meditation Masters and Buddhist Scholars. He has been broadcasting, lecturing and publishing about Buddhism in Thailand since 1970 (BE 2513), and toured universities in the United States for four years, before the press of responsibilities at home became too demanding.

Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith's mission is to revitalize Buddhism, placing equal emphasis on academic study and meditation practice. In 1986, he ordained as a monk with the name Sermchai Jayamangalo. In 1998 he received the Royal Ecclesiastical Rank of Phra Bhavana Visutthikhun; and in 2004 he was awarded the rank of Phra Rajyanvisith. He has published over 40 books, 200 articles, and two journals, and recorded over 700 Dhamma lectures. In BE 2550 (CE 2007) he was awarded an honorary doctorate in Buddhist Administration from Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. In 2008, he was elected National Coordinator for all provincial meditation centers throughout Thailand.

Wat Luang Phor Sodh

Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith has led Wat Luang Phor Sodh to become a recognized center of excellence in meditation practice, Pali language, scripture studies, and temple administration. The temple conducts or coordinates training locally for Rajburi Province, regionally for Ecclesiastical Region 15 (four central provinces), nationally for the Thai National Office of Buddhism, and internationally for the World Buddhist University.

At the provincial level, Wat Luang Phor Sodh is one of very few temples in Thailand designated as both a Pro-

vincial Pali Studies Center and a Provincial Meditation Institute. In 1999, the Sangha Body established Wat Luang Phor Sodh as Rajburi's second Provincial School of Pali Education, preparing students for the three national *Dhamma* examinations and the full-range of national Pali examinations from Pali Grammar and Pali Level 1 through Pali Level 9, the highest, with noteworthy success. In 2001, the Sangha Body also approved establishing the temple as Rajburi's first Provincial Buddhist Meditation Institute, authorized to organize official meditation retreats for both monks and laity.

At the regional level, Wat Luang Phor Sodh serves as an Academic Services Unit for Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, training monks from throughout Ecclesiastical Region 15, which consists of four central provinces: Nakorn Pathom, Ratchaburi, Petchaburi, and Samut Sakorn. The Wat currently provides pre-university courses for monks lacking prerequisites and a Bachelor's Degree Program in Buddhist Studies. Coming soon is a Master's Degree Program in Buddhist Administration.

At the national level, Wat Luang Phor Sodh has served as the Coordination Center for all Provincial Meditation Institutes throughout Thailand since 2008. The Center is currently preparing a standardized handbook which covers all of the major forms of meditation practices in

Thailand today. The temple, in collaboration with the National Office of Buddhism, has trained over 1,500 senior Thai monks from throughout the country to become teachers of *Vipassanā* Meditation. In addition, Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith's perceptive *Dhamma* lectures are broadcast regularly over the National Broadcasting System of Thailand, on both radio and TV, in both Thai and English.

At the international level, the Wat Luang Phor Sodh Buddhist Meditation Institute (BMI) has been recognized as an Associated Institution of the World Buddhist University since 2006. It trains a continual stream of international meditators in English, with exceptional results. In 2007, Four out of seven participants (57%) meditated to *Jhāna*, seeing their refined human body. Four out of ten (42%) transcended in meditation to *Dhammakāya*; and, three out of ten (29%) meditated to experiencing Nirvana (*Nibbāna*) temporarily. Meditators are enthusiastic: "A once in a lifetime opportunity! Showed me a new world! Put life in a much bigger perspective! Encouraged me to live in a more altruistic way! In Nirvana I was overwhelmed; I knew I don't have to doubt any more!" But, the number served is still small. BMI is initiating "Meditation Online" to reach more meditators.

In sum, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith and Wat Luang Phor Sodh have an extremely impressive record which has now been well recognized from provincial through international levels. You will find that the broadcasts compiled here go far beyond the ordinary in both scholastic erudition and inspiration for meditation practice. This is an extremely unique blend of academic and transcendental knowledge, rarely available in English. You hold a very valuable resource, please take full advantage of it.

Phra Khru Baitika Dr. Barton Yanathiro

Interviewer and Editor

CHAPTER 2

DO GOOD (1): DĀNA

06 July 2008

After seeing this endless cycle of death and rebirth during the first part of the night, Lord Buddha felt eager to learn what caused these beings to be reborn in either suffering or happy worlds...

... The Buddhist way of life consists of Dāna (Generosity), Sīla (Moral behavior) and Bhāvana (Meditation). Offering Dāna is a powerful way of progressing towards new happiness in life and new happiness in the world, in accordance with Lord Buddha's enlightened wisdom.

Question 1: Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith, welcome venerable sir. This is our 13th Sunday Dhamma Talk. Last time we completed one year of radio broadcasts, beginning with Enlightenment Night and ending with advanced Vipassana *Vijja* and a meditation in which we hope some listeners may have transcended to *Dhammakāya*. What's left? Where do we go from here?

Answer 1: Good morning ladies and gentlemen. We have, indeed, completed our first round of Dhamma Talks. There is, however, always much more to discuss. Lord Buddha spent 45 years expounding the Dhamma. Most of these lessons focused on how to live properly, based on Lord Buddha's enlightened wisdom, in order to avoid suffering, and progress to new levels of happiness in life and new levels of happiness in the world.

These lessons emphasized avoiding evil, doing good, Selfless Giving, Self purification, and ultimately superhuman perfection.

Question 2: How does Lord Buddha teach us to avoid evil and progress towards higher levels of happiness?

Answer 2: When Lord Buddha sat down under the Bodhi Tree 2,596 years ago, in the first watch [of the night], Lord Buddha concentrated His mind up to the fourth level of absorption or *Jhāna* in order to remove all hin-

drances from his mind. His mind became pure – very pure. In that state of mind He could recall past lives – uncountable past lives – both His own past lives and the past lives of other beings. He could see all world beings – human beings, animals, hungry ghosts, demons, celestial beings, Brahman beings, and Formless Brahman beings. He could see all beings in the whole universe. He saw that all of these were continually dying and then getting reborn again all the time – in endless reincarnation.

This is what we call scientific research, using a very effective and efficient instrument to see with. Lord Buddha saw reality – natural reality. He saw that all world beings are reborn – right away – right away after dying. And, He saw that most of them are reborn into the suffering worlds – as animals, hungry ghosts, demons, or hell beings. He saw all the worlds of Hell beings, down in the lower depths of the universe. He saw that only very few get reborn in the happy worlds such as the Human World, Celestial World, the Brahman World, or the Formless Brahman World. This caused Him to feel compassion for all beings. This was the knowledge of the past now referred to as the first *Vijjā* or *Pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇa* – remembrance of past lives

After seeing this endless cycle of death and rebirth during the first part of the night, Lord Buddha felt eager to learn what caused these beings to be reborn in either suffering or happy worlds. So, in the second watch He again

meditated up to the fourth absorption or *Jhāna*, concentrating His mind to purify it from hindrances. When His mind was very firmly concentrated and very pure, He made a wish to follow individual beings from the past through the present and into the future. This enabled Him to see the cause and effect of past actions (*Kamma*) leading to rebirth in either suffering or happy worlds.

Specifically, Lord Buddha saw five major causes of rebirth in the suffering worlds. Number one was intentionally killing other world beings. Number two was theft. Number three was adultery. Number Four was telling lies. Number Five was addiction to intoxicants. These were the major causes, but there were also others, such as careless sexual affairs — thinking only about sex and engaging in sex while taking intoxicants. This is just an example. This is bad *Kamma* (action and reaction) for those who behave this way. Lord Buddha saw that many world beings who acted improperly received suffering as the result — either during the present life or after dying. Bad *Kamma* was the essential cause of being reborn into the suffering worlds — the worlds of hungry ghosts, animals, demons, or hell beings. This is the Second *Vijjā* or *Cutūpapātañña* — knowledge of the deaths and rebirths of all beings in accordance with the Law of *Kamma*.

For each of these unwholesome types of conduct with dire consequences, there is a positive opposite with beneficial rewards. The positive opposite of killing is doing good and helping others, treating all beings with loving kindness and mercy. This will win good friends and develop warm relationships in the same lifetime. Thus, humans who steer clear of killing live peacefully, free from enemies, and also avoid the horrific future karmic results. Such wholesome behavior not only leads to being reborn in the human being world, but also opens opportunities for making further merit and receiving higher rewards such as celestial rebirth.

The positive opposite of theft is doing good with generosity and honesty, such as donating one's own property, sharing Dhamma and useful knowledge in one's career, and sacrificing one's time, or foregoing one's own happiness to help others.

Wholesome behavior, opposite to committing adultery, is being true to one's partner and carefully controlling sexual activity. It brings the immediate benefits of a stable, warm, loving family life and well-adjusted, happy children. In addition, it avoids both social problems and disastrous future personal consequences.

Wholesome behavior, opposite to lying and deceit, is being honest with yourself and others. It results in a reputation for sincerity and reliability which builds interpersonal trust and an expanding network of good friends and colleagues who hold one near and dear. It also avoids the terrible future consequences in store for liars.

Wholesome behavior, opposite to addiction to intoxicants is avoiding alcohol and drugs. It results in clear, bright consciousness, right mindfulness, and proper understanding of Dhamma, immediately recognizing good and bad. This is very advantageous. It leads to practicing Dhamma in the right way, doing good, living better, improving mindfulness, and enjoying good physical and mental health. In the future, such exemplary behavior can lead to rebirth in the human being world, or in the celestial realms.

Question 3: Well, sir, you have clearly laid out the wisdom of *Sīla* or moral behavior. Where does *Dāna* or generosity fit in to all this?

Answer 3: *Dāna*, often translated as generosity, is considered the highest human act of merit-making. But, the word “generosity” may not adequately incorporate the element of sacrifice implicit in the meaning. *Dāna* does not mean simply donating to charity, but, giving up something you cherish as near and dear for the benefit of someone else.

The first component of *Dāna* is right intention in advance — intending that the other person should have a better life. Second, the one performing *Dāna* should remain feeling happy throughout the act of giving. Third, he or she should remain happy about the *Dāna* even after the *Dāna* is completed.

The rewards of *Dāna* include human rebirth into a good, well-to-do, family and continued well-being into middle age, as well as adequate support in old age.

In ideal *Dāna*, the donor is pure, with selfless motivation. The recipients are also pure or striving to purify themselves. And, the object or advice or Dhamma donated is also pure. Pure *Dāna*, like this, can bring rewards that last for a hundred thousand lifetimes into the future, far beyond the range of just good moral behavior.

We can specify more about the rewards from *Dāna*. If a donor performs *Dāna* himself, but does not urge others to do likewise, he will have no followers in future lifetimes. If he urges others to donate but does not do so himself, he will have followers but no wealth. But, if he does both, he will have both wealth and followers. If he does not do either, he will be poor and alone, perhaps even a beggar.

Question 4: What remains beyond *Dāna*?

Answer 4: When the sacrifice component of *Dāna* exceeds the ordinary human level, *Dāna* becomes *Dāna Pāramī* there are three levels of *Dāna Pāramī*. When the donor can give up what he like most, that is ordinary *Dāna Pāramī*. When he can give up his own blood or body parts to save another, that *Dāna is Upapāramī*. When he is ready to give up his own life or family to save or help another, that *Dāna is Paramatta Pāramī*. The Bodhisatta must complete all 10 perfections at all three levels.

General *Dāna*, given to human beings who practice *Sīla* and *Bhāvana* produces rewards for more than 100,000 lifetimes. *Dāna Upapāramī* produces even longer rewards, and *Dāna Paramatta Pāramī* produces rewards that last indefinitely until the donor becomes enlightened. Even *Dāna* given to animals brings rewards which last over 100 lifetimes. *Dāna* offered to humans who do not observe precepts brings rewards which last over 1,000 lifetimes. *Dāna* given to those who do practice morality brings rewards lasting over 100,000 lifetimes. *Dāna* presented to those who know and teach Dhamma brings rewards over 10 million lifetimes. Finally, *Dāna* offered to those practicing to become a *Sotābanna* Noble Disciple, or any level higher than this, brings uncountable rewards.

So, in summary, the Buddhist way of life consists of *Dāna*, *Sīla* and *Bhāvana*. Offering *Dāna* is a powerful way of progressing towards new happiness in life and new happiness in the world, in accordance with Lord Buddha's enlightened wisdom.

Meditation Practice

Question 5: Thank you very, very much, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. And now, I would like to ask you to lead us in a few moments of meditation.

Phra Rajyanvisith: **Meditation**

Today we will meditate farther than before. We will continue on to the bodies. Please be very alert and concentrated.

We sit upright in a regular meditation posture (Figure 1), cross-legged as seen in some Buddha images, with the right leg resting upon the left. The right hand rests on the left, palm turned upwards, with the right index finger just touching the left thumb. The body is straight and the mind is fully alert. Take a deep breath and relax the body until you feel comfortable. Close your eyelids lightly, do not press them.

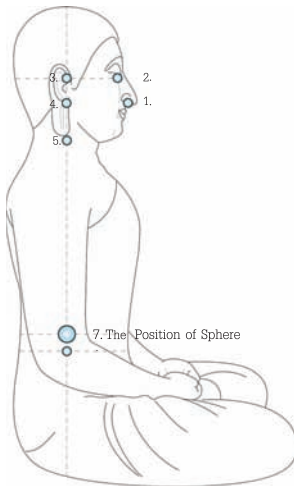


Figure 1: The Meditation Posture



Figure 2: The Object of Visualization

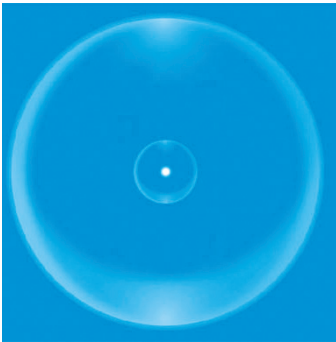
We use two aids: First, a mantra, repeated over and over again. Our mantra is “*Sammā Arahang.*” Second, an object of visualization (Figure 2), a bright, clear luminous sphere called the *Āloka Kasiṇa* or light object. Using these aids, we draw the mind inward to the center of the body, and the mind components of vision, memory, thought and awareness come together into oneness.



Imagine a bright, clear, luminous sphere located at Position Seven, in the center of the body, two inches or five centimeters above the navel. This is Position Seven, the position of the sphere at the center of the body. Rest your mind inside the sphere and Repeat “*Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang,*” continually and mindfully.

Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Focus your mind there. Stop Still. Feel the stillness. When the mind stops, perfectly still, at the center of the center, the center expands itself and becomes a new sphere. Place your mind gently inside the new sphere. Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Place your mind there. Stop still. Eventually, a bright clear sphere will arise. This is the Dhamma Sphere. Do not be

overjoyed. Keep your mind calm in equanimity. Hold the mind still, and stop repeating *Sammā Arahang*. Just concentrate at the center of the Dhamma sphere. This is your own nucleus which gives rise to this body and this mind. You should feel your mind at the very purest state it has ever achieved, with firm oneness. You should experience the greatest happiness you have ever known – not happiness based on an external object, but happiness arising from within, due to being fully pure from the Five Hindrances.



Continue meditating as before by stopping still at the center of the center of the Dhamma Sphere. Stop still and wait. When the concentration is just right, sphere after sphere pops up by itself from the center, each one inside the previous one. First comes the Sphere of *Sīla* or moral behavior, followed by the Sphere of *Samādhi* or concentration, and then the Sphere of *Paññā* or Wisdom. These are followed by the Sphere of *Vimutti* or transcendence, and then the Sphere of *Vimutti-ñānadassana* or the view of reality from transcendence. We call this, simply, the Sphere of Insight. Enter each sphere, successively, and focus your mind still at the pinpoint of bright light or hollow spot at the center. When the mind stops still, a new sphere emerges.



Figure 3: Crude Human Body Figure 4: Refined Human Body

When you reach the Insight Sphere, you continue in the same way, stopping still at the center. Again the center expands itself. But, this time, instead of a new sphere, you see your own Refined Human Body, sitting cross-legged in meditation position, facing the same direction as you are facing. Don't be startled, just keep observing. It looks very much like yourself. It has your own face. But, it is brighter, purer, more radiant. It may even be crystal clear. Take your time. If you see the Refined Human Body, take your time to study it and get comfortable with it. Can you see that the figure is sitting on a thin circular pedestal? This is the *Jhāna* factors which support the body. Take your time to make the body and pedestal bright and clear.

When you feel comfortable with the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the Refined Human Body. Expand to fill the whole body. Feel the body from the inside. Feel the arms. Feel the legs. Feel the head. Feel the toes. Say to yourself: “I am the Refined Human Body. I have become the Refined Human Body. I have the Refined Human mentality.” Feel that.

When you feel comfortable inside the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the sphere at the center of the refined human body. Focus on the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. The center expands itself. You see your Celestial Body. So Big, So Bright, So Beautiful. The Celestial Body is double the size of the Human Body. And, so much brighter. Adjust your mind’s eye to the new brightness so that you can see clearly. Just take a moment of silence to enjoy the Celestial body.

[Pause.]



Figure 5:
Crude Celestial Body



Figure 6:
Refined Celestial Body

When you feel comfortable with the Celestial Body, place your mind gently inside the Celestial Body. Expand, Expand, Expand, Expand to fill this whole big, bright, beautiful, body. Feel the body from the inside. Feel the arms. Feel the legs. Feel the head. Feel the toes. Say to yourself: “I am the Celestial Body. I have become the Celestial Body. I have the Celestial mentality.” Feel that. Feel the bigness, the beauty, the brightness, the loving-kindness, the peace, and the compassion. Take a moment to enjoy that. Say to yourself: “I am the Celestial Body. I have become the Celestial Body. I have the Celestial mentality.”

[Brief pause.]



Figure 7: Dhammakāya

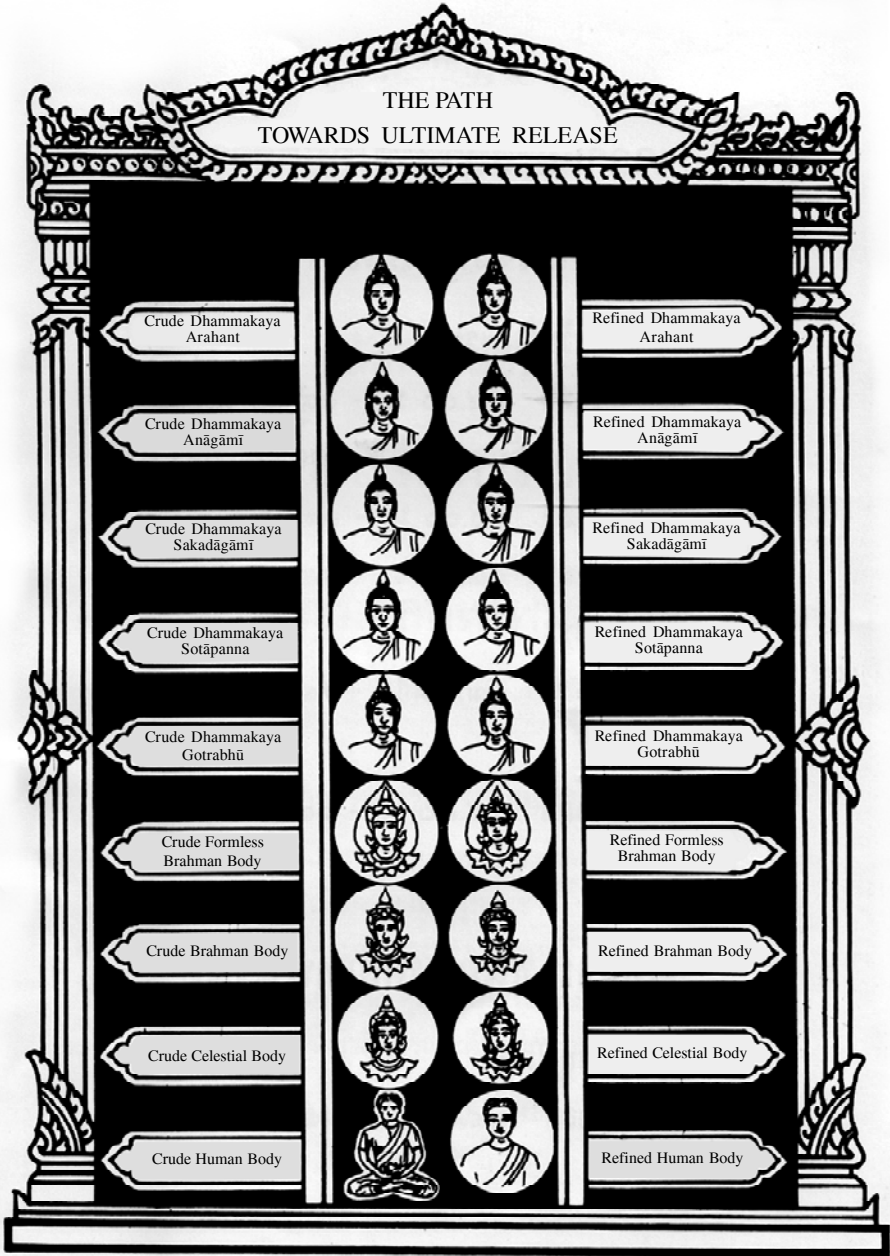
For those who reach this state of mind, go on with the same procedure. As larger and larger, more and more radiant bodies appear, become each more refined body, one-by-one, until you reach *Dhammakāya* (Figure 8 on page 26). *Dhammakāya* looks like a transparent Buddha statue – very radiant, very pure! The Buddha statue, sitting cross-legged, is about 9 meters in height and width. Become *Dhammakāya* fully, right away. You will find this state of mind the purest and best happiness that you have ever experienced. (Please see all 18 bodies on page 26)

[Pause.]

And now, let us share all of the merit that we have made in this meditation and previously – together with all of our loving kindness – with all beings everywhere throughout the universe. We share with our parents, our grandparents, our family, our teachers and our friends. We share with our King and our Queen and the whole royal family. May Lord Buddha bless all of us to lead a peaceful, happy life, free from suffering, free from problems and free from enmity. And may this meditation help to bring us closer to transcendence and Nirvana. [Pause.] And, now, we come slowly out of meditation and open the eyes.

Interviewer: Thank you very, very much, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. We reverently appreciate your exceptional meditation instruction.

Phra Rajyanvisith: May Lord Buddha bless all of you.



CHAPTER 3

DO GOOD (2) : DON'T KILL OR STEAL

02 August 2008

Those who meditate to high levels and recall past or future lifetimes can see all this. Attaining Dhammakāya enables us to see the past lives of both ourselves and others. Thus, we can see the Law of Karma in action. That is why meditation leads to the Right Wisdom to stop vengeance through accepting and practicing precepts of morality and keeping the mind pure and peaceful with Brahma Vihāra. This includes the Right Wisdom to realize that vengeance can never be stopped by revenge, but only with loving kindness and forgiveness.

Question 1: Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith, welcome venerable sir. This is our 14th Sunday Dhamma Talk. Last time we began examining Lord Buddha’s prescriptions for avoiding evil and doing good, emphasizing “*Dāna*” or generosity and sacrifice. Today we shall continue to study Lord Buddha’s principles in more detail. Could you please begin by reviewing briefly what we covered last time?

Answer 1: Good morning ladies and gentlemen. Last time we began by studying how, on enlightenment night, Lord Buddha developed three supra-mundane insights or *Vijjā* during the three watches of the night, conducting scientific research with a very effective and efficient instrument to see true natural reality, arriving at the relevant, reliable, valid, necessary and sufficient data needed for enlightenment. The first insight was Recollection of Past Lives. (*Pubbenivāsā nussati-ñāṇa*). Lord Buddha could see both His own past lives and the past lives of all other beings throughout the universe. He could see that all of these beings were continually dying and then immediately getting reborn again into either suffering or happy worlds, all the time in endless reincarnation.

The second *Vijjā* or insight was *Cutūpapāta-ñāṇa* which verified the Law of Karma – the cause and effect of good or bad past actions (*Kamma*) leading to rebirth in ei-

ther happy worlds or suffering worlds, the worlds of hungry ghosts, animals, demons, or hell beings.

Finally, the third *Vijjā* or insight was *Āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa* – the knowledge of how to eradicate mental defilements which Lord Buddha employed during the Third Watch of the night to achieve enlightenment. These insights led Lord Buddha to teach three exhortations: Avoid evil, do good, and purify your mind.

Last time, we began studying the details of Lord Buddha's prescriptions in the five precepts. He saw five major causes of rebirth in the suffering worlds: killing, theft, adultery, telling lies, and addiction to intoxicants. We noted that there are positive opposites for each of these, and focused on *Dāna* or generosity and sacrifice as the highest merit-making activity. Ideal *Dāna*, where the donor is pure, with selfless motivation, and the recipients are also pure or striving to purify themselves. And, the object, advice or *Dhamma* given is also pure, can bring rewards that last for a hundred thousand lifetimes into the future.

Today, we shall continue to delve deeper into *Dāna* practice in terms of Lord Buddha's three exhortations – Avoid evil; Do Good; and Purify the mind. In particular, we

shall focus on the first two of the Five Precepts: Don't Kill and Don't Steal.

Question 2: Thank you, Venerable Sir. Now, can you please tell us how *Dāna* practice fits into the first precept to avoid intentional killing of living beings?

Answer 2: Ultimately, *Dāna* is not just generous and selfless speech and action, but also the corresponding mindset called the *Brahma Vihāra* or Divine Abode, which consists of Loving Kindness (*Mettā*), Compassion (*Karuṇā*), Sympathetic Joy (*Muditā*), and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*). Refraining from intentionally killing other living beings should be based on the sympathy to know that it causes them the ultimate suffering of death. Knowing that we, ourselves, each cling to life with all our being and strive hard to avoid death, we should recognize that all other beings feel the same way and have compassion for them. This is the *Brahma Vihara* mentality that motivates refraining from killing.

Question 3: What are the consequences of intentional killing?

Answer 3: The most common consequence among parties with ordinary animal or human mentality is a blood feud that can continue over many lifetimes. A fascinating story illustrating this is the case of “The Bitter Feud through

Various Existences of *Kala Yakkhini*,” told in the *Dhammapāda*, Chapter 1, Number 4.

In Buddha’s time, there was a family living in his region where the father had died and the son resolved not to marry in order to take care of his mother. But, the mother wanted a grandson to carry on the family, so she convinced the son to let her find him a wife. Over the years, however, the wife never gave birth. So, the mother found him a second wife. The first wife was really upset, but pretended to be happy.

The second wife proved very fertile. Twice, the first wife fed the second wife medicine to induce an abortion, as soon as she knew she was pregnant. The third time, the second wife did not tell the first wife, but when she eventually found out, she again induced an abortion. Eventually, the second wife died in childbirth. Before her death, filled with hatred, the second wife vowed vengeance on the first wife and her future offspring. This was the beginning of the feud. The husband found out what the first wife had done, and killed her.

In their next lifetimes, the second wife was born as a cat in that same family, and the first wife was born as a hen. Whenever the hen laid eggs or had baby chicks, the cat would eat them. The hen vowed vengeance, saying in the next life-

time I will kill you and your offspring. In the end, the cat also killed the hen.

In their next lifetimes, the second wife – cat was reborn as a doe and the first wife – hen was reborn as a leopard. Whenever the deer gave birth, the leopard would eat the child. Eventually, the leopard also ate the doe. Before dying, the deer vowed that in the next lifetime I will kill all your offspring.

In their next lifetimes, the first wife – hen – leopard was reborn as the daughter of a nobleman in Savatthi and the second wife – cat – doe was reborn nearby as an ogress named *Kala Yakkhini*. Every time the lady bore a son, the ogress would eat the baby. One day, while carrying the baby, the lady recognized the ogress in human disguise chasing them in hot pursuit. Knowing that Lord Buddha was giving a sermon nearby in Chetavana monastery, the lady and her husband rushed there. The lady broke through the crowd and laid her child at Buddha's feet for protection.

The celestial guardian stopped the *Yakkhini* at the gate and the lady told Lord Buddha her story. Then, Lord Buddha called the ogress to come in too, and told both of them about their bitter feud continuing over successive lifetimes, harbouring hatred and killing each other's offspring. They were made to see that hatred only causes more hatred. It can only cease through forgiveness, friendship, understanding, and good will. Both realised their mistakes, and,

on the admonition of Lord Buddha, made their peace with each other.

Then, Lord Buddha requested the lady to hand over her son to the ogress. Fearing for the safety of her son, she hesitated, but because of her devotion and confidence in the enlightened one, she finally handed over her son as directed. The son was warmly received by the *Yakkhini*. After kissing and caressing the child tenderly like her very own son, the ogress handed over the child back to his mother. As a result of this episode, there was much goodwill on both sides.

Lord Buddha concluded in verse:

Hatred never ceased through hatred
In this world
Through love alone it ceases
This is an eternal law.

Dhammapāda Verse 5

Question 4: Wow, what a story! Are feuds the only karmic results of killing?

Answer 4: No. This is only one of the possible karmic results. Perpetrators might also be killed in return within the current lifetime. They would then be reborn in hell for a

very, very long time. When finally reborn as a human, they would again be killed.

These people generally have very short lifetimes. They are often seriously ill or continually ill and weak. Some meet with other disasters and become lame or lose a limb, or even die. Others commit suicide. When reborn, they may die before they are released from the womb, or while they are still in the egg, for birds. This is the Law of Karma.

Those who meditate to high levels and recall past or future lifetimes can see all this. Attaining *Dhammakāya* enables us to see the past lives of both ourselves and others. Thus, we can see the Law of Karma in action. That is why meditation leads to the Right Wisdom to stop vengeance through accepting and practicing precepts of morality and keeping the mind pure and peaceful with *Brahma Vihāra*. This includes the Right Wisdom to realize that vengeance can never be stopped by revenge, but only with loving kindness and forgiveness.

Question 5: Thank you very much, Venerable sir. Now, can you please explain the role of *Dāna* in the second precept to avoid stealing?

Answer 5: The second precept is usually translated as “refraining from taking that which is not given.” We readily recognize that this also includes avoiding cheating

and corruption. But, the *Dāna* perspective sheds an even broader light on this precept. More important than avoiding individual unwholesome acts is abstaining from improper means of livelihood which engage one in harmful activities on a daily basis.

For example, wrong occupations include any involvement in the production, distribution, selling, or passing out of drugs, narcotics, cigarettes, marijuana, opium, cocaine, amphetamines or drugs to stimulate sex, as well as liquor, beer, or any alcohol product that causes addiction. Such intoxicants all cause deterioration of physical and mental health and aggravate cravings. Addicts cannot work efficiently and contribute to degeneration of the family and social economies. Even worse, addicts who run short of money may turn to immoral acts or crime – even attacking parents and loved ones.

Another example of a wrong occupation is engaging in the production, selling, or distribution of poisons, weapons, or equipment for killing other beings. These range from traps and fishing lines up to missiles and atomic bombs. Also included here is raising animals such as cows, pigs, and chickens for slaughter. Even government officials controlling contagious diseases who direct farmers to kill thousands of animals are engaged in an immoral occupation, often involving mass executions with horrendous torment.

These animals die vowing revenge, which can lead to war when they are later reborn as humans.

War is not usually based on rational reasoning. For example, in Cambodia there was a big lake with lots of fish. People killed the fish *en masse* and the fish died vowing revenge. Later, when they came back as humans, they sought to kill others without any rationale reason, like the Khmer Rouge. Similarly, you will note that along the coast, people generally live by catching and killing fish and other sea animals. When they are reborn as humans, they feel revengeful. Therefore, you will find that people along the coast often kill each other without any rationale.

In conclusion, we have examined the first two of the Five Precepts from the perspective of *Dāna* practice. We have found that *Dāna* practice implies acting based on the *Brahma Vihāra* or Divine Abode mind-set. In the case of the first precept, refraining from killing, we found that killing often leads to blood feuds which may continue over many future lifetimes. Such feuds and hatred cannot be ended through revenge, but only through loving-kindness, forgiveness and reconciliation.

With respect to the second precept, refraining from stealing, we learned that avoiding immoral means of livelihood that involve one in unwholesome activities on a daily basis is even more important than refraining from individual

dishonest acts. In this regard, occupations which involve killing animals can be a cause underlying war.

Next time we shall continue our detailed examination of *Dāna* practice as it affects the remaining three precepts.

Meditation Practice

Question 6: Thank you very, very much, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. And now, I would like to ask you to lead us in a few moments of meditation.

Phra Rajyanvisith: **Meditation**

We sit upright in a regular meditation posture, cross-legged as seen in some Buddha images, with the right leg resting upon the left. The right hand rests on the left, palm turned upwards, with the right index finger just touching the left thumb. The body is straight and the mind is fully alert. Take a deep breath and relax the body until you feel comfortable. Close your eyelids lightly, do not press them.

We use two aids: a mantra, “*Sammā Arahant*” and an object of visualization, a bright, clear luminous sphere called the *Āloka Kasiṇa* or light object. Using these aids, we draw the mind inward to the center of the body, and the mind components of vision, memory, thought and aware-

ness come together into oneness. Imagine a bright, clear, luminous sphere located at the center of the body, two inches or five centimeters above the navel. Rest your mind inside the sphere and Repeat “*Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang,*” continually and mindfully. Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Focus your mind there. Stop Still.

When the mind stops, perfectly still, at the center of the center, the center expands itself and becomes a new sphere. Place your mind gently inside the new sphere. Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Place your mind there. Stop still. Eventually, a bright clear sphere will arise. This is the Dhamma Sphere. Do not be overjoyed. Keep your mind calm in equanimity. Hold the mind still, and stop repeating *Sammā Arahang*. Just concentrate at the center of the Dhamma sphere. This is your own nucleus which gives rise to this body and this mind. You should experience the greatest happiness you have ever known – not happiness based on an external object, but happiness arising from within, due to being fully pure from the Five Hindrances.

Continue meditating as before by stopping still at the center of the center of the Dhamma Sphere. When the concentration is just right, sphere after sphere pops up by itself from the center, each one inside the previous one.

The Spheres of *Sīla* or moral behavior, *Samādhi* or concentration, *Paññā* or Wisdom, *Vimutti* or transcendence, and *Vimuttiñāṇadassana* or insight appear one after the next. Enter each sphere, successively, and focus your mind still at the pinpoint of bright light or hollow spot at the center. When the mind stops still, a new sphere emerges.

When you reach the Insight Sphere, you continue in the same way, stopping still at the center. Again the center expands itself. But, this time, instead of a new sphere, you see your own Refined Human Body, sitting cross-legged in meditation position, facing the same direction as you are facing. Don't be startled, just keep observing. It looks very much like yourself. It has your own face. But, it is brighter, purer, and more radiant. It may even be crystal clear. Take your time to make the body and its pedestal bright and clear.

When you feel comfortable with the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the Refined Human Body. Expand to fill the whole body. Feel the body from the inside. Feel the arms. Feel the legs. Feel the head. Feel the toes. Say to yourself: “I am the Refined Human Body. I have become the Refined Human Body. I have the Refined Human mentality.” When you feel comfortable inside the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the sphere at the center of the refined human body. Focus on

the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. The center expands itself and you see your Celestial Body.

For those who reach this state of mind, go on with the same procedure. As larger and larger, more and more radiant bodies appear, become each more refined body, one-by-one, until you reach *Dhammakāya*. *Dhammakāya* looks like a transparent Buddha statue – very radiant, very pure! The Buddha statue, sitting cross-legged, is about 9 meters in height and width. Become *Dhammakāya* fully, right away. You will find this state of mind the purest and best happiness that you have ever experienced.

[Pause.]

And now, let us share all of the merit that we have made in this meditation and previously – together with all of our loving kindness – with all beings everywhere throughout the universe. We share with our parents, our grandparents, our family, our teachers and our friends. We share with our King and our Queen and the whole royal family. May Lord Buddha bless all of us to lead a peaceful, happy life, free from suffering, free from problems and free from enmity. And may this meditation help to bring us closer to transcendence and Nirvana.

[Pause.]

And, now, we come slowly out of meditation and open the eyes.

Interviewer: Thank you very, very much, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. We reverently appreciate your exceptional meditation instruction.

Phra Rajyanvisith: May Lord Buddha bless all of you..



CHAPTER 4

DO GOOD (3): DON'T COMMIT ADULTERY, LIE OR TAKE INTOXICANTS

07 September 2008

...The key to overcoming lust, cheating and intoxication lies in heightened individual responsibility and the corresponding constant mindfulness to guard against inappropriate behavior. These can be developed through propagating Buddhist Ethics, which emphasize individual responsibility in accordance with the natural Law of Karma or Kamma – “Do good, get good; Do Evil, get evil.” Teaching ethics is good, but it is “Seeing for Yourself” through meditation which leaves an indelible impact with the strength to successfully counter the impetus for lust, cheating and intoxication.

Question 1: Welcome, Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. This is our 15th Sunday Dhamma Talk. We are in the midst of examining Lord Buddha’s precepts for avoiding evil and doing good. We began by considering “*Dāna*” or generosity and sacrifice. Last time we reflected on the first two of the Five Precepts, to avoid killing and stealing. Today, we shall contemplate the remaining three Precepts, to avoid improper sex, lying, and intoxicants. Could you please begin by reviewing briefly what we covered last time?

Answer 1: Good morning ladies and gentlemen; it’s nice to be back with you again. The Five Precepts are based on Lord Buddha’s transcendental Wisdom achieved on enlightenment night. They are designed to avoid the five most common reasons for rebirth into the suffering worlds. Last time we examined the first two of the Five Precepts – To avoid intentionally killing other living beings and to avoid stealing or cheating.

We found that intentional killing is common and even institutionalized in various occupations such as raising animals for slaughter and fishing. Refraining from killing should be based on the sympathy to know that it causes the ultimate suffering of death. We, ourselves, cling to life with all our being. We should recognize that other beings feel the same way. This is the Divine Abode or *Brahma Vihāra* mentality of Loving Kindness (*Mettā*), Compassion (*Karuṇā*), Sympathetic Joy (*Muditā*), and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*).

A common consequence of killing is a blood feud that can continue over many lifetimes. The story of *Kala Yakkhini*,” told in the *Dhammapāda*, Chapter 1, Number 4, recounts how two wives repeatedly killed each other’s children over a series of lifetimes, until Lord Buddha made peace between them. The lesson is that hatred never ceases through hatred; only through love. Murderers can also be killed in return. Then, they will be reborn in hell for a very, very long time. And, when they are finally reborn as a humans, they will be killed again. They generally have very short lifetimes and are often weak or ill. Or, they may meet with disasters and become lame or lose a limb or even die. This is the Law of Karma. Those who meditate to high levels can see this.

Regarding the second Precept to avoid theft, the *Dāna* and *Brahma Vihāra* provide an even broader perspective. More important than avoiding isolated unwholesome acts is abstaining from improper livelihood which engages one in harmful activities on a daily basis. Wrong occupations include production, selling, or distribution of poisons, weapons, or equipment for killing other beings, ranging from traps and fishing lines up to missiles and atomic bombs, as well as production, distribution, or selling of drugs or alcohol products that cause addiction.

Another wrong occupation is raising animals for slaughter. These animals die vowing revenge. This can lead to war when they are later reborn as humans. War is not usually based on rational reasoning. For example, in Cambodia there was a big lake with lots of fish. People killed the fish *en masse* and the fish died vowing revenge. Later, when they came back as humans, they sought to kill others without any reason – like the Khmer Rouge.

Question 2: Thank you very much, Dr. Phra Rajyan-visith. Now, what about the third precept to avoid improper sex.

Answer 2: The third Precept is usually translated as “I undertake the precept to refrain from wrongful sexual activity.” Most specifically, this means intentional adultery. It occurs due to one’s failure to control sexual feelings when the sense organs come in contact with arousing stimuli. When one fails to control and carefully calm down sensual desires, it allows the mind to become more and more dominated by lust (*Rāga*) and sexual passion. Then, the mind seeks to feel better by stirring up the emotions in many different ways. The mind can be agitated with many sensual objects. For example, X-rated movies and TV shows and nightclubs are designed to augment sexual desire. When the mind is overcome by lust, the individual loses morality (*Sīla*), moral shame (*Hiri*), and moral dread of consequences (*Ottappa*). This leads to committing adultery and

other immoral sexual acts. Adultery includes same sex relationships.

Such acts lead to both personal and social problems. In personal life, they waste time and money on useless activities of no advantage. Uncontrolled nightlife can also interfere with alertness and creativity at work. Worse are the dangers to physical health, such as contagious diseases and especially HIV.

Uncontrolled lust leads to many problems in social life. It can lead to crimes such as attacks due to jealousy. Similarly, those who are fond of going out to sensual entertainment will naturally meet with many criminal events. Most profound are the problems caused in family life, such as quarrels with the spouse. It will cause the family life to be not as warm and loving as it should be, and can lead to a broken home and separation. Even worse are the effects on the children. This violation causes big social problems – even into the next generation – because it also results in children being born out-of-wedlock, and the children suffer psychological problems from lack of loving, loyal parents. Thus, they may grow up as disobedient delinquents and go astray, following the parents' example, seeking boyfriend girlfriend relationships or other sexual relationships outside the family with those who are not firm in good conduct. This is very much what we see in our present social reality.

Thus, such behavior is passed on to the next generation. In general, it causes bigger and bigger social problems and results in the government and society having to spend large sums of money trying to cope with these social and family problems, such as divorce, orphans, prostitution, criminal behavior around bars, and international pornography over the internet. Governments don't deal with the underlying cause, which is adultery or improper sexual behavior due to uncontrolled lust. Such inappropriate deeds are caused by ignorance or lack of knowledge of the natural Law of Karma or *Kamma* which shows that they inevitably lead to dire consequences both in this lifetime and the next. They just try to alleviate the manifold predicaments that arise from it.

When dying, those who have committed adultery are reborn either in hell or as hungry ghosts or in the animal world for a long time. For example, in the scriptures, women who acted like "butterflies" were reborn as hungry ghosts with no skin, just covered with sores. After eventually returning to the human world, the remaining karma results in becoming a prostitute for up to 100 lifetimes. Afterwards, the person may become a homosexual or sterile female for many lifetimes. Even though societies accept homosexuality, it is still bad Karma. Next, the person becomes born as a normal woman. Anytime that the person commits adultery during this long process, the process starts over again.

If the normal woman is loyal to her husband, she will be reborn as a man.

On the positive side, those who avoid adultery and are satisfied with their own spouse will help to protect the family and solve the social problems. Any society that is wise should campaign on being careful in sensuous affairs and not letting lust dominate, by practicing *Sīla*, and *Samā dhi*. This means Right Action and Right Livelihood. Right Livelihood, here, means not to engage in any aspect of the “Sex Industry,” including not only prostitution, but also night clubs. So, in conclusion, one must be very careful in sensual affairs. The wise person who knows the Law of Karma or *Kamma* will stop such bad conduct. If one is married, one should be honest and loyal to ones spouse, avoiding adultery or carelessness due to lust.

Question 3: Thank you very much, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. Now, what about the fourth precept to avoid lying.

Answer 3: The Fourth Precept is usually translated as “to avoid improper speech.” Most broadly, this has four components: To avoid lying such as deception, to avoid harsh language such as cursing, to avoid divisive speech such as scandal-bearing, and to avoid useless speech such as gossip. The focus, however, is always on lying.

The last category, useless speech, also includes spreading wrong teachings (*Micchādiṭṭhi*) which lead people astray. This is a very serious offence which can cause rebirth in the lowest Logantara Hell outside the universe. For example, some teach that killing members of other religions will bring one close to God. This is a very, very evil lie. We must all be very careful to avoid spreading such false ideas.

In modern consumer society, “selling” with ads designed to mislead the purchaser has become a high-paying profession, located near the core of modern business. In turn, many individuals feel it is “OK” to cheat large, impersonal organizations like governments on things like income taxes or customs duties.

In the present lifetime, lying, deceitfulness, dishonesty and double-dealing cause one to earn a reputation as an unreliable person. This engenders lack of trust and results in fewer and fewer good friends, close colleagues, and loving partners, in both work and social life. Due to lack of trust, one will miss out on promotions and remain in the lower classes of society with dishonor. After death, one will be reborn into hell for a very long time. Eventually, this being returns to the human world, but has a very, very bad smelling mouth. Those who avoid wrong speech will be more trusted by society. Their speech will be more reliable, polite, sociable and useful. Thus, the wise person should give up wrong speech.

Question 4: Thank you again, Venerable Sir. Finally, what can you tell us about the fifth precept to avoid intoxicants.

Answer 4: The Fifth Precept, “To refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness” is, perhaps, the most important of all, because when mindfulness is dulled by such intoxicants one may also break all the other Precepts. Drugs include cocaine, opium, marijuana, amphetamines, sexual stimulants and cigarettes. Alcoholic drinks include brandy, whiskey, liquors, champagne, beer and wine. It is addiction to these drinks and drugs which is the ultimate culprit, but one must always maintain extremely sharp watchfulness – very carefully, because restraint becomes blunted from the very beginning.

Addiction to intoxicants causes rapid deterioration of both physical and mental health. Disabilities can range from Sclerosis of the Liver to Delirium Tremens. Addiction also leads to catastrophic social consequences such as loss of employment, marital separation and divorce, and potentially homelessness. Even when families stay together, addictive behavioral tendencies are usually instilled from the parents into the children. Physically, some take alcohol to stimulate the sex drive. In fact, it lowers self-control, releasing inhibitions, but also worsening performance. Others take alcohol with a meal as a digestive. This can lead to

eating more, upsetting the stomach, gas, and weakening of the internal organs. Over time, the body grows feeble and open to disease.

Mentally, alcohol dulls the thinking process and slows down reaction time. We are all familiar its dangerous effects on drivers. The same thing applies at work. Addiction can lead to inability to hold a job and a lower economic state for the individual, the family, and the society. We have all heard of performers who begin by taking a little nip to prepare themselves before going on stage, but end up addicted and physically deteriorated to the point where they can no longer perform, sometimes even dying. After death, addicts are reborn in hell and stay there for thousands of lifetimes. When they ultimately return to the human world, they will be insane for many lifetimes. Even after being born sane, they will continue to be forgetful.

Societies worldwide have accepted drinking alcohol as normal, and it is everywhere incorporated into social ceremonies. This abets addiction and contributes to myriad social defects. Societies and governments end up spending millions trying to cope with the resultant problems such as alcoholism, broken homes, orphans, poverty and social welfare. Even criminal problems like the drug traffic are related, and governments must demand and deploy more and more weapons to deal with these. Today, drug traffic is a

major source of financing for the international terrorism which is our major global problem. All these funds which could be devoted to development are wasted without any advantage, just to try to protect society. Governments, societies and the world community become weaker and weaker.

In conclusion, the key to overcoming lust, cheating and intoxication lies in heightened individual responsibility and the corresponding constant mindfulness to guard against inappropriate behavior. These can be developed through propagating Buddhist Ethics, which emphasize individual responsibility in accordance with the natural Law of Karma or *Kamma* – “Do good, get good; Do Evil, get evil.” Teaching ethics is good, but it is “Seeing for Yourself” through meditation which leaves an indelible impact with the strength to successfully counter the impetus for lust, cheating and intoxication.

Meditation Practice

Question 5: Well, Sir, you certainly have given us something to think about. Thank you very, very much. And now, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith, I would like to ask you to lead us in a few moments of meditation.

Phra Rajyanvisith: **Meditation**

We sit upright in a regular meditation posture, cross-legged as seen in some Buddha images, with the right leg resting upon the left. The right hand rests on the left, palm turned upwards, with the right index finger just touching the left thumb. The body is straight and the mind is fully alert. Take a deep breath and relax the body until you feel comfortable. Close your eyelids lightly, do not press them.

We use two aids: a mantra, “*Sammā Arahang*” and an object of visualization, a bright, clear luminous sphere called the *Āloka Kasīṇa* or light object. Using these aids, we draw the mind inward to the center of the body, and the mind components of vision, memory, thought and awareness come together into oneness. Imagine a bright, clear, luminous sphere located at the center of the body, two inches or five centimeters above the navel. Rest your mind inside the sphere and Repeat “*Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang,*” continually and mindfully. Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Focus your mind there. Stop Still.

When the mind stops, perfectly still, at the center of the center, the center expands itself and becomes a new sphere. Place your mind gently inside the new sphere. Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Place your mind there. Stop still. Eventually, a bright clear sphere will arise. This is the Dhamma Sphere. Do not be overjoyed. Keep your mind calm in equanimity. Hold the mind still, and stop repeating *Sammā Arahant*. Just concentrate at the center of the Dhamma sphere. This is your own nucleus which gives rise to this body and this mind. You should experience the greatest happiness you have ever known – not happiness based on an external object, but happiness arising from within, due to being fully pure from the Five Hindrances. Continue meditating as before by stopping still at the center of the center of the Dhamma Sphere. When the concentration is just right, sphere after sphere pops up by itself from the center, each one inside the previous one. The Spheres of *Sīla* or moral behavior, *Samādhi* or concentration, *Paññā* or Wisdom, *Vimutti* or transcendence, and *Vimuttiñāṇadassana* or insight appear one after the next. Enter each sphere, successively, and focus your mind still at the pinpoint of bright light or hollow spot at the center. When the mind stops still, a new sphere emerges. When you reach the Insight Sphere, you continue in the same way, stopping still at the center. Again the center expands itself. But, this time, instead of a new sphere, you see your own Refined Human Body, sitting cross-legged in medita-

tion position, facing the same direction as you are facing. Don't be startled, just keep observing. It looks very much like yourself. It has your own face. But, it is brighter, purer, and more radiant. It may even be crystal clear. Take your time to make the body and its pedestal bright and clear.

When you feel comfortable with the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the Refined Human Body. Expand to fill the whole body. Feel the body from the inside. Feel the arms. Feel the legs. Feel the head. Feel the toes. Say to yourself: “I am the Refined Human Body. I have become the Refined Human Body. I have the Refined Human mentality.” When you feel comfortable inside the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the sphere at the center of the refined human body. Focus on the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. The center expands itself and you see your Celestial Body.

For those who reach this state of mind, go on with the same procedure. As larger and larger, more and more radiant bodies appear, become each more refined body, one-by-one, until you reach *Dhammakāya*. *Dhammakāya* looks like a transparent Buddha statue – very radiant, very pure! The Buddha statue, sitting cross-legged, is about 9 meters in height and width. Become *Dhammakāya* fully, right away. You will find this state of mind the purest and best happiness that you have ever experienced.

[Pause.]

And now, let us share all of the merit that we have made in this meditation and previously – together with all of our loving kindness – with all beings everywhere throughout the universe. We share with our parents, our grandparents, our family, our teachers and our friends. We share with our King and our Queen and the whole royal family. May Lord Buddha bless all of us to lead a peaceful, happy life, free from suffering, free from problems and free from enmity. And may this meditation help to bring us closer to transcendence and Nirvana.

[Pause.]

And, now, we come slowly out of meditation and open the eyes.

Interviewer: Thank you very, very much, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. We reverently appreciate your exceptional meditation instruction.

Phra Rajyanvisith: May Lord Buddha bless all of you.



CHAPTER 5

GOOD INTENTIONS

5 October 2008

... Right Intentions are developed and maintained through continual mindfulness to control the passions and foster wholesome intentions, speech, and action. These are achieved through accumulation of ten Factors of Perfection or Pāramī, which are Generosity, Morality, Renunciation, Wisdom, Insight and Understanding, Energy and Effort, Tolerance, Forbearance and Endurance, Truthfulness, Resolution, Loving kindness, and finally, Equanimity which means indifference to praise or blame.

Question 1: Welcome, Reverend Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. This is our 16th Sunday Dhamma Talk. We have just completed a series of three broadcasts on avoiding evil and doing good, which reviewed the Five Precepts in detail. Today, we turn to how to develop and maintain the good intentions which must underlie and motivate good behavior. But first, could you please begin by reviewing briefly what we covered last time?

Answer 1: Good morning ladies and gentlemen and welcome back. Last time we completed our study of the Five Precepts, which are designed to avoid the five most common reasons for rebirth into suffering worlds. We examined wrongful sexual activity, improper speech, and addiction to intoxicants.

Wrongful sexual activity stems from failure to restrain sexual feelings aroused when the sense organs are excited by provocative stimuli. The uncontrolled mind becomes dominated by lust and sexual passion. Adultery leads to serious personal, family and social problems, ranging from encounters with criminal elements and quarrels with the spouse to broken homes and violent physical attacks based on jealousy. Within the family, children suffer psychological problems and may grow up as disobedient delinquents, following their parents' example. Other children may even be born out-of-wedlock. This is very much what we see in our present social reality.

When dying, those who commit adultery are reborn either in hell or as hungry ghosts or in the animal world for a long time. After eventually returning to the human world, their remaining karma (*Kamma*) results in becoming a prostitute for up to a hundred lifetimes. Afterwards, the person may also become a homosexual or sterile female for many lifetimes.

Improper speech has four components: to avoid lying such as deception, harsh language such as shouting, divisive speech such as tale-bearing, and useless speech such as gossip. Lying, deceitfulness, dishonesty and double-dealing bring about an unreliable reputation, lack of trust, and fewer good friends, colleagues, and loving partners. One misses out on promotions and remains in the lower classes of society with dishonor.

After death, liars are reborn in hell for a very long time. When eventually returning to the human world, they will have a very, very bad smelling mouth. Improper speech also includes spreading wrong teachings (*Micchāvācā*) which lead people astray, such as the doctrine that killing supporters of other religions will bring one close to God. This is a very serious offence which can cause rebirth in the lowest Logantara Hell outside the universe.

Addiction to intoxicants causes rapid deterioration of both physical and mental health, and leads to catastrophic social consequences such as loss of employment, marital separation, divorce, and potentially homelessness. Such problems are passed on through the children, and governments spend millions to alleviate resultant social problems. In conclusion, overcoming lust, cheating and intoxication requires heightened individual responsibility and constant mindfulness which can be maintained through observance of Buddhist Precepts and “Seeing for Yourself” in meditation.

Question 2: Thank you, Venerable Sir. Now, let us turn to today’s question regarding intentions. What, exactly, is the problem?

Answer 2: The problem is unwholesome intentions which arise naturally due to confusion by passions. The untrained mind is continually being misled by three root passions – greed, hatred, and delusion – which lead to excessive desire or craving, attachment or addiction, and unwholesome behavior such as indulgence and transgression. Attachment is the strong grasping feeling of self possession that this is me or mine or myself. This attachment to perceived self and material objects is the essence of delusion which leads to constant struggle throughout life and to re-birth over and over again.

Greed is the insatiable, ravenous, selfish hunger, lust and longing for things. It arises when any of the five sense organs contact an object considered desirable – the eye sees a beautiful sight, the ear hears a sweet sound, the nose smells a fragrant aroma, the tongue tastes a choice flavor, or the skin senses a tender touch. Unrestrained, these all lead to voracious obsession, lust, dependence and addiction. Obtaining an object does not ease the struggle. The object becomes a burden, requiring constant attention. We must continually take care to maintain and protect it. This applies to our loved ones and to our own physical body as well as to the big car or mansion on the hill that we cherish. Sooner or later, our partner and friends in life will pass away and we will be left grieving. This is the real nature of all the compound phenomena which make up this world. They are impermanent, eventually cause for suffering, and without ultimate, true essence. They arise, exist for a while – changing continually while in existence – and, then, disintegrate. This applies to our own body and personality as well as external objects. Separation from loved ones and beloved objects is suffering. Enforced association with detested persons and objects is suffering. In short, attachment to the whole Five Aggregates of existence is suffering, and attachment to each aggregate separately – body, perception, memory, thought or awareness – is also suffering.

Realization of this truth does not mean that one should necessarily shun marriage and a loving family, only that one must maintain the proper balance and the ability to continue on alone when one's partner dies. Avoid the sad plight of Jane, who was completely dependent on her husband. When he died, she had a stroke paralyzing half of her body, and lived on for 12 years in a hospital bed, complaining continuously. The stronger the attachment, the more the suffering. One should have the Right Wisdom to recognize that death is a natural part of life and be able to keep the mind peaceful, releasing attachment to become less and less until it is manageable.

The second passion, hatred, is just the opposite side of the coin labeled greed. It is the abhorrence, loathing, detestation, and revulsion for all beings and things disliked. In mild form, it is just irritation, annoyance, frustration or exasperation. In practice, ill will, based on hatred, can result in blood feuds seeking recurrent revenge over successive lifetimes. Various forms of hatred and jealousy lead to evil intentions, careless speech and unwholesome actions. Evasion, escape or flight based on dislike are the mirror image of attachment, leading just as surely to suffering when one is unavoidably united with someone or something detested.

The passion of delusion is not knowing the right intention, speech or action in a particular situation. This results in lack of mindfulness and careless behavior. It is based on Ignorance. Ignorance is non-knowledge of the past, the present, and the future, and how they are linked. In other words, it is non-knowledge of the natural law of cause and effect. It results in non-knowledge of the proper action to take in the present situation in order to stay on the Right Path to a happy future. Specifically, untrained minds do not know where they are coming from. They cannot recollect former lifetimes. They do not know where they were born in the past – whether in the suffering or happy worlds. If they could meditate, they would see this and know right away which is the right path. Similarly, untrained minds do not know their future. They do not know where they will be reborn when they die. They just believe according to what others say. If they could meditate, they could see for themselves and distinguish the right action for each situation. Ignorance also includes non-knowledge of where departed relatives have been reborn. This, too, can be achieved through meditation. Finally, ultimate ignorance is non-knowledge of Lord Buddha's major teachings – The Four Noble Truths and Dependent Origination. These definitive Truths can be penetrated to higher and higher levels of understanding through deeper and deeper levels of Vipassana meditation.

Question 3: What are the good intentions that one should develop and maintain?

Answer 3: The three core good intentions are the opposites of the three passions – greed, hatred, and delusion – which dominate the untrained mind. The good intentions are selfless generosity (*Dāna*), loving-kindness and compassion or helping others to release from suffering (*Mettā* and *Karuṇā*), and Right Thought or Intentions (*Sammāsaṅkappa*).

The opposite of greed is selfless generosity or *Dāna* coming from the heart, aimed at helping to satisfy the real needs of others, even at the expense of self sacrifice. Specifically, appropriate generosity should aim at helping others to escape suffering. *Dāna* falls naturally into three levels: First, giving material objects such as the four essential requirements for living – food, clothing, shelter and medicine; Second, sharing *Dhamma*, the ultimate Truths about nature contained in Lord Buddha’s teachings; and Third, offering forgiveness (*Abhaya Dāna*). This is the highest form of generosity.

The first component of pure *Dāna* is right advance intention that the other person should have a better life. Second, the one performing *Dāna* should remain feeling happy throughout the act of giving. Third, he or she should remain happy about the *Dāna* even after the *Dāna* is com-

pleted. Pure *Dāna*, where the intention, donor, gift, and recipient are all pure, can bring karmic (*Kamma*) rewards which last for a hundred thousand lifetimes into the future.

The opposites of hatred and ill will are loving kindness, friendliness or goodwill (*Mettā*) and compassion (*Karuṇā*) which lead to helping others to find release from suffering. *Mettā* means selfless wishing for other beings to achieve what they are looking for in accordance with their own desires. *Mettā* leads to altruistic intentions and actions to help others achieve their goals. Among humans, this can be simply helping a friend, or expressed through voluntary activities to help the needy. *Mettā* for other beings can be expressed in such minor acts as lifting a worm from baking cement and placing it on soft earth. Compassion or *Karuṇā* intends to help others find release from suffering, whether or not they recognize this as their fundamental problem. Thus, *Karuṇā* aims to help others reduce external attachments to impermanent material objects and strengthen internal reliance on their own well-trained mind which can become a reliable refuge.

Right Thoughts and Intentions or *Sammāsaṅkappa* are to seek release from the causes, and ultimately the root cause of suffering. Right Intentions consist of three components: First, Renunciation or *Nekkhamma-saṅkappa*; Second, Absence of hatred or ill will *Abyāpāda-saṅkappa* which implies Loving Kindness; and Third, Non-violence

or *Avihimsā-sangkappa* which means avoiding killing or harming all living beings.

Renunciation to free oneself from selfish desires and attachments is the key element in Right Intentions. At a minimum it is expressed in self denial and distancing oneself from hedonistic sensuality. Ultimately, it can lead to giving up the world and ordaining as a recluse.

Question 4: How should one go about developing and maintaining good intentions?

Answer 4: Right Intentions are developed and maintained through continual mindfulness to control the passions and foster wholesome intentions, speech, and action. These are achieved through accumulation of ten Factors of Perfection or *Pāramī*, which are (1) Generosity (*Dāna*), (2) Morality (*Sīla*), (3) Renunciation (*Nekkhamma*), (4) Wisdom, Insight and Understanding (*Paññā*), (5) Energy and Effort (*Viriya*), (6) Tolerance, Forbearance and Endurance (*Khanti*), (7) Truthfulness (*Sacca*), (8) Resolution (*Adhiṭṭhāna*), (9) Loving kindness (*Mettā*) and finally, (10) Equanimity (*Upekkhā*) which means indifference to praise or blame.

The first step is to practice generosity or *Dāna* in all three levels cited above. The second step is to accept and live by precepts – either Five or Eight Precepts for lay people, in accordance with one’s ability. Then, one must

live the precepts in daily life, with continual, alert mindfulness – always asking oneself am I doing the right thing? Am I saying the right thing? Am I thinking the right thing? Do I have the Right Intentions?

Vipassanā Meditation also helps by leading one to the Right Wisdom to really penetrate to knowing the Three Universal Characteristics of all compound things – that they are subject to change and impermanent; ultimately lead to suffering; and are devoid of true essence. This Right Wisdom supports release from attachment, leading to Right Intentions and control of the passions. This leads to doing good, personal peaceful-happiness, and actions which are ultimately fruitful for oneself and one's family, society, and the whole world.

Meditation Practice

Question 5: Thank you, Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. You have taught us a lot. Now, I would like to ask you to lead us in a few moments of meditation.

Phra Rajyanvisith: **Meditation**

We sit upright in a regular meditation posture, cross-legged as seen in some Buddha images, with the right leg resting upon the left. The right hand rests on the left, palm

turned upwards, with the right index finger just touching the left thumb. The body is straight and the mind is fully alert. Take a deep breath and relax the body until you feel comfortable. Close your eyelids lightly, do not press them.

We use two aids: a mantra, “*Sammā Arahang*” and an object of visualization, a bright, clear luminous sphere called the *Āloka Kasiṇa* or light object. Using these aids, we draw the mind inward to the center of the body, and the mind components of vision, memory, thought and awareness come together into oneness. Imagine a bright, clear, luminous sphere located at the center of the body, two inches or five centimeters above the navel. Rest your mind inside the sphere and Repeat “*Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang,*” continually and mindfully. Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Focus your mind there. Stop Still.

When the mind stops, perfectly still at the center of the center, the center expands itself and becomes a new sphere. Place your mind gently inside the new sphere. Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Place your mind there. Stop still. Eventually, a bright clear sphere will arise. This is the Dhamma Sphere. Do not be overjoyed. Keep your mind calm in equanimity. Hold the mind still, and stop repeating *Sammā Arahang*. Just concentrate at the center of the Dhamma sphere. This is your own nucleus which gives rise to this body and this mind.

You should experience the greatest happiness you have ever known – not happiness based on an external object, but happiness arising from within, due to being fully pure from the Five Hindrances.

Continue meditating as before by stopping still at the center of the center of the Dhamma Sphere. When the concentration is just right, sphere after sphere pops up by itself from the center, each one inside the previous one. The Spheres of *Sīla* or moral behavior, *Samādhi* or concentration, *Paññā* or Wisdom, *Vimutti* or transcendence, and *Vimuttiñāṇadassana* or insight appear one after the next. Enter each sphere, successively, and focus your mind still at the pinpoint of bright light or hollow spot at the center. When the mind stops still, a new sphere emerges.

When you reach the Insight Sphere, you continue in the same way, stopping still at the center. Again the center expands itself. But, this time, instead of a new sphere, you see your own Refined Human Body, sitting cross-legged in meditation position, facing the same direction as you are facing. Don't be startled, just keep observing. It looks very much like yourself. It has your own face. But, it is brighter, purer, and more radiant. It may even be crystal clear. Take your time to make the body and its pedestal bright and clear.

When you feel comfortable with the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the Refined Human Body. Expand to fill the whole body. Feel the body from the inside. Feel the arms. Feel the legs. Feel the head. Feel the toes. Say to yourself: “I am the Refined Human Body. I have become the Refined Human Body. I have the Refined Human mentality.” When you feel comfortable inside the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the sphere at the center of the refined human body. Focus on the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. The center expands itself and you see your Celestial Body.

For those who reach this state of mind, go on with the same procedure. As larger and larger, more and more radiant bodies appear, become each more refined body, one by-one, until you reach *Dhammakāya*. *Dhammakāya* looks like a transparent Buddha statue – very radiant, very pure! The Buddha statue, sitting cross-legged, is about 9 meters in height and width. Become *Dhammakāya* fully, right away.

When your mind is most peaceful, contemplate the physical body as it really is – impure, subject to change, impermanent, and ultimately non-self. Consider the hair on the head. Examine one hair. See how dirty and greasy the roots are. Continue with the hair on the body. Then, examine the nails, the teeth, and the skin. Realize how foul, polluted, and repulsive each of these really is. When you are done, sit still and purify yourself by stopping still at the

center of the center of the purer and purest spheres and states of mind that appear. You will find this state of mind the purest and best happiness that you have ever experienced.

[Pause.]

And now, let us share all of the merit that we have made in this meditation and previously – together with all of our loving kindness – with all beings everywhere throughout the universe. We share with our parents, our grandparents, our family, our teachers and our friends. We share with our King and our Queen and the whole royal family. May Lord Buddha bless all of us to lead a peaceful, happy life, free from suffering, free from problems and free from enmity. And may this meditation help to bring us closer to transcendence and Nirvana.

[Pause.]

And, now, we come slowly out of meditation and open the eyes.

Interviewer: Thank you very much, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. We reverently appreciate your excellent meditation instruction.

Phra Rajyanvisith: May Lord Buddha bless all of you. We would like to invite you all to join us for meditation at Wat Luang Phor Sodh, any Sunday. Our bus leaves from Wat

Saket, the Golden Mountain Temple, at seven o'clock every Sunday morning. I lead morning chanting and meditation for all, beginning at nine thirty, and Phra Bart conducts an afternoon meditation session in English from twelve to two P.M. Please come join us.

For details, please see our English websites at “www.dhammacenter.org” or “www.meditationpark.org” or our Thai website at “dhammakaya.org.”

CHAPTER 6

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

02 November 2008

Why is Personal Development important?

We often hear words like “National Development”, “Social Development,” “Economic Development,” or even “Global Development.” But, it is Personal Development which underlies all of these. This is highlighted in the environmental slogan “Think globally; act locally.” It is the sum total of many individual decisions and behaviors which are reflected in Social, National, and, eventually, global Development.

Question 1: Welcome, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. This is our 17th Sunday Dhamma Talk. Last time, we focused on developing and maintaining the good intentions needed to support proper behavior. Today, we begin a new series with “Personal Development,” which underlies family, social, national and global development. But first, could you please review briefly what we covered last time?

Answer 1: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome. Last time we focused on good intentions. Unwholesome intentions arise naturally in the untrained mind due to the three root passions – greed, hatred, and delusion – which lead to craving, attachment, addiction, and unwholesome behavior such as over indulgence and transgression. Greed is the insatiable, ravenous, selfish hunger, lust and longing that arises when any of the five sense organs contact a desirable object. Hatred, is the opposite side of the coin; the abhorrence, loathing, detestation, and revulsion for things and beings disliked. Delusion, based on ignorance, is not recognizing the right path leading to happiness and wrong paths leading to suffering.

Good intentions are selfless generosity (*Dāna*), loving-kindness (*Mettā*), compassion (*Karunā*), and the Right Intention (*Sammāsāṅkappa*) to escape suffering. There are three levels of *Dāna*: First, giving material objects, Sec-

ond, sharing ultimate Truths about nature or *Dhamma*, and, third, offering forgiveness (*Abhaya Dāna*). Forgiveness is the highest form of generosity. Loving-kindness and compassion lead to selflessly helping others to find release from suffering, whether or not they recognize this as their fundamental problem. Thus, they aim to help others reduce external attachments to impermanent material objects and to strengthen reliance on their own well-trained mind which can become their refuge.

Right Intention or *Sammāsaṅkappa*, seeks release from the causes of suffering. There are three components: First, Renunciation or *Nekkhamma-saṅkappa* to free oneself from selfish desires and attachments. This is the key component, distancing oneself from hedonistic sensuality. Second is freedom from hatred, *Abyāpāda-saṅkappa*, always dwelling in Loving Kindness. And, third is Non-violence or *Avihimsā-saṅkappa* to avoid killing or harming any living being.

Right Intention is developed and maintained through continual mindfulness to control the passions and foster wholesome thought, speech, and action. These are achieved through accumulation of the ten Factors of Perfection or *Pāramī*: *Dāna* or Generosity; *Sīla* or Morality; *Nekkhamma* or Renunciation; *Paññā* or Wisdom; *Viriya* or Effort; *Khanti* or Endurance; *Sacca* or Truthfulness; *Adhitthāna*

or Resolution; *Mettā* or Loving-kindness; and *Upekkhā* or Equanimity, which means indifference to praise or blame.

Step One is fully practicing *Dāna* or generosity and Step Two is always living by the Five Precepts, checking “Am I saying and doing the right thing?” and “Do I have the Right Intention?”

Question 2: Thank you, Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. Now, let us turn to today’s topic of Personal Development. What is Personal Development and why is it important?

Answer 2: Personal Development is the individual improving his or her own behavior and mental processes through careful control of actions, words, thoughts and feelings. This answer may surprise some listeners. Many might think of Personal Development as advancement in their career, or earning more money, or learning a new skill. But, most would agree that, ultimately, what they seek is happiness. Happiness is inside. It is not out there in the big house or new car. In brief, Lord Buddha’s enlightened wisdom teaches “Do good; Get good. Do Evil; Get Evil.” Thus, we can maximize happiness and minimize suffering by improving our own conduct.

Why is Personal Development important? We often hear words like “National Development”, “Social Development,” “Economic Development,” or even “Global Development.” But, it is Personal Development which underlies all of these. This is highlighted in the environmental slogan “Think globally; act locally.” It is the sum total of many individual decisions and behaviors which are reflected in Social, National, and, eventually, global Development.

Question 3: How should one go about fostering personal development?

Answer 3: We pursue proper personal advancement by conforming to the essence of Lord Buddha’s Dhamma Practice, which is summed up in his three core exhortations: Avoid evil! Do Good! and Purify the mind! Lord Buddha details procedures for avoiding evil and doing good, and also provides some guidelines for purifying the mind, in both the Eightfold Path and the Five Precepts. In reviewing our previous broadcast, I have just described how avoiding the three root passions of greed, hatred and delusion can lead to good intentions reflecting selfless generosity or *Dāna*, loving-kindness or *Mettā*, compassion or *Karuṇā*, and the Right Intention (*Sammāsaṅkappa*) to seek release from the causes of suffering. Specific Mind Development is accomplished through meditation – Concentration or *Samadha* Meditation and Insight or *Vipassanā* Meditation. *Samadha* Meditation frees the mind from the Five Hin-

drances, enabling one to see clearly. *Vipassanā* Meditation unveils the Right Wisdom to recognize Right Action, Right Speech, and Right Thought leading to a peacefully happy life, as well as to recognize the wrong paths to avoid.

Refraining from bad actions is summarized in three of the Five Precepts as abstaining from killing living beings, stealing or cheating, and improper sexual behavior. The Eightfold Path adds Right Livelihood – avoiding occupations such as dealing in weapons, intoxicants or raising animals for food, as well as those fostering the Road to Ruin or Highway to Hell (*Abāyamukh*), which includes intoxication, roaming the streets at night, going out to shows, gambling, associating with bad companions, and habitual idleness. Refraining from improper speech is one of the Five Precepts, with four components: to refrain from false speech, coarse language, talk that causes discord (such as tale bearing), and gossip or idle chatter. Good speech and actions imply the opposites – treating others with loving kindness and compassion, and wishing them a good, happy life far from problems and suffering.

Question 4: What are the virtues conducive to personal development here and now?

Answer 4: There are four virtues conducive to immediate personal development in the present lifetime. These virtues are called *Diṭṭhadhammikatta-saṁvattanika-dhamma*. They are: first, energy and diligence, which is

called *Uṭṭhānasampadā*; second, vigilance and carefulness, called *Ārakkhasampadā*; third, keeping good associates, called *Kalyāṇamittatā* and finally fourth, balanced living in accordance with one's economic condition. This is called *Samajīvitā*.

In one's lifetime, energy and diligence are first applied in studying to build a powerful foundation of knowledge and experience. Later, one must work earnestly with endurance, using modern technology to foster one's career – never being lazy, feeling discouraged or shirking one's duty. Vigilance and carefulness lead to protecting one's money and property to last long, by avoiding wasteful living and recklessness. They can also secure one's source of livelihood, reputation and family name from dishonor. Keeping good company with those who exhibit proper behavior will protect one from the "Road to Ruin" or "Highway to Hell" (*Abāyamukh*). One will gain true and stable friendships and partners who can provide sage advice and material support. Finally, living economically, allocating personal and family income carefully to cover necessities, while saving some and allocating some for making merit, will protect one from uncontrolled greediness and craving for the latest gadget. This is what our King has promulgated as "Sufficiency Economy."

In conclusion, one who practices these four virtues will achieve the Personal Development to live peacefully and happily in this lifetime in accordance with generally accepted standards for human beings. If more and more individuals pursue appropriate Personal Development, we will also experience concomitant development at the family, social, national, and global levels.

Requesting Five Precepts

Question 5: Thank you, Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. You have taught us a lot. Now, I would like to ask you to lead us in a few moments of meditation.

Phra Rajyanvisith : **Requesting Five Precepts**

Today we will begin by requesting the Five Precepts first and then continue on to meditation.

Layman:

*Ahaṃ Bhante Visuṃ Visuṃ Rakkhaṇatthāya
Tisaraṇena Saha Pañca Sīlani Yācāmi,*

Venerable Sir, I ask for refuge and for the five precepts.

*Dutiyaṃpi, Ahaṃ Bhante Visuṃ Visuṃ
Rakkhaṇatthāya Tisaraṇena Saha Pañca Sīlani Yācāmi,*

For the second time, Venerable Sir, I ask for...

Tatiyampi, Ahaṃ Bhante Visuṃ Visuṃ
Rakkhaṇatthāya Tisaraṇena Saha Pañca Sīlani Yācāmi,
For the third time, Venerable Sir, I ask for ...

Phra Rajyanvisith followed by Layman:

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa

Homage to the Exalted One, the Holy One, the Perfectly
Enlightened One.

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa

Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi
I go to the Buddha for refuge,
Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi
I go to the Dhamma for refuge,
Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi
I go to the Saṅgha for refuge,

Dutiyaṃpi, Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi
For the second time, ...

Dutiyaṃpi, Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi
Dutiyaṃpi, Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi

Tatiyampi, Buddhaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi

For the third time, ...

Tatiyampi, Dhammaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi

Tatiyampi, Saṅghaṃ Saraṇaṃ Gacchāmi

Phra Rajyanvisith (Pali Only) followed by Layman
(Pali & English)

1. *Pāṇātipātā Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*

I undertake the precept to refrain from destroying
living creatures.

2. *Adinnādānā Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi*

I undertake the precept to refrain from taking that
which is not given.

3. *Kāmesumicchācārā Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadaṃ
Samādiyāmi.*

I undertake the precept to refrain from unlawful
sexual activity.

4. *Musāvādā Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*

I undertake the precept to refrain from incorrect
speech.

5. *Surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā Veramaṇī.
Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi*

I undertake the precept to refrain from intoxicating
drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness.

Phra Rajyanvisith: *Imāni Pañca Sikkhāpadāni Samādiyāmi.*

Layman:

Imāni Pañca Sikkhāpadāni Samādiyāmi.

I undertake to observe these Five Percepts

Imāni Pañca Sikkhāpadāni Samādiyāmi.

Imāni Pañca Sikkhāpadāni Samādiyāmi.

Phra Rajyanvisith: *Sīlena Sugatim Yanti.*

These Precepts bring a happy life.

Layman: *Sādhu.* - It is proper

Phra Rajyanvisith: *Sīlena Bhogasampadā*

These Precepts bring prosperity

Layman: *Sādhu*

Phra Rajyanvisith: *Sīlena Nibbutim Yanti. Tasmā Sīlam Visodhaye.*

All beings will attain Nirvana by *Sīla*. Thus, *Sīla* is holy [should be purified].

Layman: *Sādhu*

Phra Rajyanvisith: Prostrate three times to the Buddha Statue, if available. Now we begin meditation.

Meditation Practice

Phra Rajyanvisith: **Meditation**

We sit upright in a regular meditation posture, cross-legged as seen in some Buddha images, with the right leg resting upon the left. The right hand rests on the left, palm turned upwards, with the right index finger just touching the left thumb. The body is straight and the mind is fully alert. Take a deep breath and relax the body until you feel comfortable. Close your eyelids lightly, do not press them.

We use two aids: a mantra, “*Sammā Arahang*” and an object of visualization, a bright, clear luminous sphere called the *Āloka Kasiṇa* or light object. Using these aids, we draw the mind inward to the center of the body, and the mind components of vision, memory, thought and awareness come together into oneness. Imagine a bright, clear, luminous sphere located at the center of the body, two inches or five centimeters above the navel. Rest your mind inside the sphere and Repeat “*Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang,*” continually and mindfully. Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Focus your mind there. Stop Still.

When the mind stops, perfectly still at the center of the center, the center expands itself and becomes a new sphere. Place your mind gently inside the new sphere. Look

for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Place your mind there. Stop still. Eventually, a bright clear sphere will arise. This is the Dhamma Sphere. Do not be overjoyed. Keep your mind calm in equanimity. Hold the mind still, and stop repeating *Sammā Arahang*. Just concentrate at the center of the Dhamma sphere. This is your own nucleus which gives rise to this body and this mind. You should experience the greatest happiness you have ever known – not happiness based on an external object, but happiness arising from within, due to being fully pure from the Five Hindrances.

Continue meditating as before by stopping still at the center of the center of the Dhamma Sphere. When the concentration is just right, sphere after sphere pops up by itself from the center, each one inside the previous one. The Spheres of *Sīla* or moral behavior, *Samādhi* or concentration, *Paññā* or Wisdom, *Vimutti* or transcendence, and *Vimuttiñāṇadassana* or insight appear one after the next. Enter each sphere, successively, and focus your mind still at the pinpoint of bright light or hollow spot at the center. When the mind stops still, a new sphere emerges.

When you reach the Insight Sphere, you continue in the same way, stopping still at the center. Again the center expands itself. But, this time, instead of a new sphere, you see your own Refined Human Body, sitting cross-legged in meditation position, facing the same direction as you are

facing. Don't be startled, just keep observing. It looks very much like yourself. It has your own face. But, it is brighter, purer, and more radiant. It may even be crystal clear. Take your time to make the body and its pedestal bright and clear.

When you feel comfortable with the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the Refined Human Body. Expand to fill the whole body. Feel the body from the inside. Feel the arms. Feel the legs. Feel the head. Feel the toes. Say to yourself: “I am the Refined Human Body. I have become the Refined Human Body. I have the Refined Human mentality.” When you feel comfortable inside the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the sphere at the center of the refined human body. Focus on the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. The center expands itself and you see your Celestial Body.

For those who reach this state of mind, go on with the same procedure. As larger and larger, more and more radiant bodies appear, become each more refined body, one by-one, until you reach *Dhammakāya*. *Dhammakāya* looks like a transparent Buddha statue – very radiant, very pure! The Buddha statue, sitting cross-legged, is about nine meters in height and width. Become *Dhammakāya* fully, right away.

And now, let us share all of the merit that we have made in this meditation and previously – together with all of our loving kindness – with all beings everywhere through-

out the universe. We share with our parents, our grandparents, our family, our teachers and our friends. We share with our King and our Queen and the whole royal family. May Lord Buddha bless all of us to lead a peaceful, happy life, free from suffering, free from problems and free from enmity. And may this meditation help to bring us closer to transcendence and Nirvana.

[Pause.]

And, now, we come slowly out of meditation and open the eyes.

Interviewer: Thank you very much, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. We reverently appreciate your excellent meditation instruction.



CHAPTER 7

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

06 December 2008

... Lord Buddha's enlightened wisdom, however, transcends to include the hidden esoteric factors affecting future rebirth. He cited four current virtues that promote future spiritual welfare. They are: (1) being endowed with faith or confidence (Saddhā-sampadā); (2) being endowed with morality (Sīla-sampadā); (3) being endowed with generosity or sacrifice (Cāga-sampadā); and (4) being endowed with wisdom (Paññā-sampadā).

Question 1: Welcome, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. This is our 18th Sunday Dhamma Talk. Last time, we focused on “Personal Development” here and now. Today we will turn to “Future Development,” examining the resultant effects forthcoming from fruitful or harmful current actions, speech and intentions. First, however, please review briefly what we covered last time.

Answer 1: Good morning and welcome, ladies and gentlemen. Last time we discussed personal development as individual improvement of one’s own behavior and mental processes through careful control of actions, words, thoughts and intentions. We all seek happiness, and that happiness comes from inside, not outside in the big house you live in or the new car you just bought. The Law of Karma teaches “Do good; Get good. Do Evil; Get Evil.” Thus, we can maximize happiness and minimize suffering by improving our own conduct.

Personal development underlies “National Development,” “Economic Development,” and even “Global Development.” We pursue proper advancement both in our personal lives and at work by avoiding evil, doing good and purifying our minds in accordance with the Eightfold Path and the Five Precepts, avoiding the three root passions of greed, hatred and delusion, and fostering selfless generos-

ity or *Dāna*, loving-kindness or *Mettā*, and compassion or *Karuṇā* with the Right Intention to seek release from the causes of suffering.

Development of the mind is accomplished through meditation – Concentration or *Samadha* Meditation and Insight or *Vipassanā* Meditation. It unveils the Right Wisdom to recognize proper action, speech, and thought leading to a peacefully happy life. There are four virtues conducive to immediate personal development in the present lifetime. In Pali, they are called *Diṭṭhadhammikathā-saṁvattanika-dhamma*. They are: First, energy and diligence or *Uṭṭhāna-sampadā*. Second, vigilance and carefulness or *Ārakkha-sampadā*. Third, associating only with virtuous people or *Kalyāṇamittatā*. And fourth, balanced living in accordance with one's economic condition or *Samajīvitā*.

Properly applied, these build a powerful foundation of knowledge and experience, foster one's career, and protect one's property and reputation, avoiding the "Road to Ruin" and developing stable relationships with those who can provide sage advice and material support. It is very much what our King has promulgated as "Sufficiency Economy."

Question 2: Now, let's turn to future development. What virtues fostered here and now will later culminate in spiritual rewards?

Answer 2: Our previous discussion focused on personal development within the narrow, immediately visible scope of this current lifetime. Doing good often leads immediately to feeling good inside – happiness, pride, and freedom from worry about having a bad reputation. A second immediate effect of good conduct is to strengthen and speed up receiving rewards from previous good behavior and to slow down and weaken the negative consequences of previous indiscretions. Good actions also act like seat belts or air bags to protect the individual from the dire potential consequences of reckless actions. With respect to future rebirth, good actions lead to rebirth in happy worlds and bad actions lead to rebirth in suffering worlds.

Lord Buddha's enlightened wisdom, however, transcends to include the hidden esoteric factors affecting future rebirth. He cited four current virtues that promote future spiritual welfare. They are: (1) being endowed with faith or confidence (*Saddhā-sampadā*); (2) being endowed with morality (*Sīla-sampadā*); (3) being endowed with generosity or sacrifice (*Cāga-sampadā*); and (4) being endowed with wisdom (*Paññā-sampadā*).

For the first virtue, being endowed with faith, the key question is which persons and beliefs deserve enduring faith and firm conviction. We should esteem those with good conduct in terms of actions, speech and intentions. Good conduct is based on at least three factors – Morality (*Sīla*), Concentration (*Samādhi*), and Wisdom (*Paññā*). Beyond this, a good person can have two further virtues – Transcendence (*Vimutti*) and Insight (*Vimuttiñāṇadassana*).

The very highest persons to believe and follow are Enlightened Ones, or Lord Buddha and the Arahant Saints. Second highest are the Noble Disciples. In addition to Enlightened Noble Persons, these include three others on the final leg of the journey to Nirvana. The others are Stream Enterers or *Sotābana*, Once Returners or *Sakadāgāmi*, and Non-Returners or *Anāgāmi*.

The third level of trustworthy persons are monks or *Bhikkhus* and novices or *Samanera* and laymen or *Upāsaka* and laywomen or *Upāsikā* who have faith in the three gems – Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha – and diligently practice *Dhamma*. That is, they avoid evil, do good, and purify their minds through meditation to remove hindrances and attain Right Wisdom. Right Wisdom includes both Right Understanding regarding the essential characteristics of all compound phenomena as impermanent, vulnerable to suffering, and ultimately non-self, and also Right Understanding of the Four Noble Truths. Such Right Wisdom leads to release

or *Vimutti*, Insight or *Vimuttiñāḍassana* and ultimately to the Path and Fruit of *Nibbāna*. These are the people in whom we should have faith.

What beliefs deserve our confidence? We should hold firmly to Right teachings which clearly lead to the Right results, such as the teachings of Lord Buddha I cited before. So, being endowed with Faith means having confidence in the Right persons and Right teachings. They act like a light, guiding one to lead a peacefully happy life with success and prosperity, drawing ever closer to the ultimate fruit of *Nibbāna*. True Faith also protects us from following dangerous paths such as the Highway to Hell involving drinking, drugs, gambling and carousing at night, which lead to problems and suffering.

Question 3: What about the second virtue, being endowed with morality or *Sīla-sampadā*?

Answer 3: Being endowed with Morality protects us from bad conduct and from violating others – their life, their property, their spouse, or their reputation. It also protects us from violating ourselves and causing ourselves disaster. We avoid bad occupations, actions, speech, and intentions, fostering positive ways of living, interaction, language, and thoughts every minute of every day. This is doing good. It will result in both mundane and spiritual rewards, sooner or later, more or less. Good intentions lead

to peaceful, orderly speech and actions now, based on Morality, Concentration and Wisdom. These ultimately culminate in Transcendence and Insight. The quality of one's reincarnation after death depends on the mixture of good and bad conduct one has carried out in this lifetime. Thus, mindful day-to-day living based on good intentions will foster extremely important spiritual benefits later on.

Question 4: What are the spiritual benefits of being endowed with generosity and sacrifice – *Cāga-sampadā*?

Answer 4: We can demonstrate *Cāga-sampadā* or generosity and sacrifice in three ways. The first is by donating our own property to help others. This is called *Āmisa Dāna*. The objectives are to help others have a happier life and to release those who suffer from suffering. The second way is by giving good advice or teachings (*Dhamma*). This is imparting meritorious Right Knowledge to others to help them practice Right Occupation, Right Action and Right Speech, to lead their lives in a peacefully happy way. When giving advice, you must be careful to give correct *Dhamma* in accordance with the scriptures. Anyone can give their opinion, but it might not be ultimately correct guidance based on Right Wisdom.

The third type of generosity is offering forgiveness with loving kindness and compassion. This is called *Abhaya-Dāna*. This is the supreme type of sacrifice. The objective is to help others release themselves from bad conduct by practicing *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Paññā* in order to develop Right Wisdom and then Right Self Practice to get rid of passions and cravings

Question 5: Finally, what about the fourth virtue for future spiritual progress – being endowed with wisdom or *Paññā-sampadā*?

Answer 5: The fourth virtue leading to spiritual progress in the future is *Paññā-sampadā* or being endowed with Right Wisdom stemming from *Vipassanā* insight. This will lead to release from the causes of suffering in the future. So, in conclusion, these four virtues – being endowed with Faith or Confidence, Moral conduct, Generosity or Sacrifice, and Right Wisdom – light the way to future spiritual development and ultimate attainment of the fruit of *Nibbāna*.

Requesting Five Precepts

Question 6: Thank you, Venerable Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. You have taught us a lot. Now, I would like to ask you to lead us in a few moments of meditation.

Phra Rajyanvisith: **Requesting Five Precepts**

Today we will begin by requesting the Five Precepts first and then continue on to meditation.

Layman:

*Ahaṃ Bhante Visuṃ Visuṃ Rakkhaṇatthāya
Tisaraṇena Saha Pañca Sīlani Yācāmi,*

Venerable Sir, I ask for refuge and for the five precepts.

*Dutiyampi, Ahaṃ Bhante Visuṃ Visuṃ
Rakkhaṇatthāya Tisaraṇena Saha Pañca Sīlani Yācāmi,*
For the second time, Venerable Sir, I ask for...

*Tatiyampi, Ahaṃ Bhante Visuṃ Visuṃ
Rakkhaṇatthāya Tisaraṇena Saha Pañca Sīlani Yācāmi,*
For the third time, Venerable Sir, I ask for ...

Phra Rajyanvisith followed by Layman:

*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa*

Homage to the Exalted One, the Holy One, the Perfectly
Enlightened One.

*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa*

*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa*

Buddham Saraṇam Gacchāmi

I go to the Buddha for refuge,

Dhammam Saraṇam Gacchāmi

I go to the Dhamma for refuge,

Saṅgham Saraṇam Gacchāmi

I go to the Saṅgha for refuge,

Dutiyampi, Buddham Saraṇam Gacchāmi

For the second time, ...

Dutiyampi, Dhammam Saraṇam Gacchāmi

Dutiyampi, Saṅgham Saraṇam Gacchāmi

Tatiyampi, Buddham Saraṇam Gacchāmi

For the third time, ...

Tatiyampi, Dhammam Saraṇam Gacchāmi

Tatiyampi, Saṅgham Saraṇam Gacchāmi

Phra Rajyanvisith (Pali Only) followed by Layman
(Pali & English)

1. *Pāṇātipātā Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
I undertake the precept to refrain from destroying
living creatures.
2. *Adinnādānā Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi*
I undertake the precept to refrain from taking that
which is not given.
3. *Kāmesumicchācārā Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadaṃ
Samādiyāmi.*
I undertake the precept to refrain from unlawful
sexual activity.
4. *Musāvādā Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi.*
I undertake the precept to refrain from incorrect
speech.
5. *Surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā Veramaṇī.
Sikkhāpadaṃ Samādiyāmi*
I undertake the precept to refrain from intoxicating
drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness.

Phra Rajyanvisith: *Imāni Pañca Sikkhāpadāni Samādiyāmi.*

Layman:

Imāni Pañca Sikkhāpadāni Samādiyāmi.

I undertake to observe these Five Percepts

Imāni Pañca Sikkhāpadāni Samādiyāmi.

Imāni Pañca Sikkhāpadāni Samādiyāmi.

Phra Rajyanvisith: *Sīlena Sugatim Yanti.*

These Precepts bring a happy life.

Layman: *Sādhu.* - It is proper

Phra Rajyanvisith: *Sīlena Bhogasampadā*

These Precepts bring prosperity

Layman: *Sādhu*

Phra Rajyanvisith: *Sīlena Nibbutim Yanti. Tasmā Sīlam Visodhaye.*

All beings will attain Nirvana by *Sīla*. Thus, *Sīla* is holy [should be purified].

Layman: *Sādhu*

Phra Rajyanvisith: Prostrate three times to the Buddha Statue, if available. Now we begin meditation.

Meditation Practice

Phra Rajyanvisith: **Meditation**

We sit upright in a regular meditation posture, cross-legged as seen in some Buddha images, with the right leg resting upon the left. The right hand rests on the left, palm turned upwards, with the right index finger just touching the left thumb. The body is straight and the mind is fully alert. Take a deep breath and relax the body until you feel comfortable. Close your eyelids lightly, do not press them.

We use two aids: a mantra, “*Sammā Arahang*” and an object of visualization, a bright, clear luminous sphere called the *Āloka Kasiṇa* or light object. Using these aids, we draw the mind inward to the center of the body, and the mind components of vision, memory, thought and awareness come together into oneness. Imagine a bright, clear, luminous sphere located at the center of the body, two inches or five centimeters above the navel. Rest your mind inside the sphere and Repeat “*Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang, Sammā Arahang,*” continually and mindfully. Look for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Focus your mind there. Stop Still.

When the mind stops, perfectly still at the center of the center, the center expands itself and becomes a new sphere. Place your mind gently inside the new sphere. Look

for the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. Place your mind there. Stop still. Eventually, a bright clear sphere will arise. This is the Dhamma Sphere. Do not be overjoyed. Keep your mind calm in equanimity. Hold the mind still, and stop repeating *Sammā Arahang*. Just concentrate at the center of the Dhamma Sphere. This is your own nucleus which gives rise to this body and this mind. You should experience the greatest happiness you have ever known – not happiness based on an external object, but happiness arising from within, due to being fully pure from the Five Hindrances.

Continue meditating as before by stopping still at the center of the center of the Dhamma Sphere. When the concentration is just right, sphere after sphere pops up by itself from the center, each one inside the previous one. The Spheres of *Sīla* or moral behavior, *Samādhi* or concentration, *Paññā* or Wisdom, *Vimutti* or transcendence, and *Vimuttiñānadassana* or insight appear one after the next. Enter each sphere, successively, and focus your mind still at the pinpoint of bright light or hollow spot at the center. When the mind stops still, a new sphere emerges.

When you reach the Insight Sphere, you continue in the same way, stopping still at the center. Again the center expands itself. But, this time, instead of a new sphere, you see your own Refined Human Body, sitting cross-legged in

meditation position, facing the same direction as you are facing. Don't be startled, just keep observing. It looks very much like yourself. It has your own face. But, it is brighter, purer, and more radiant. It may even be crystal clear. Take your time to make the body and its pedestal bright and clear.

When you feel comfortable with the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the Refined Human Body. Expand to fill the whole body. Feel the body from the inside. Feel the arms. Feel the legs. Feel the head. Feel the toes. Say to yourself: “I am the Refined Human Body. I have become the Refined Human Body. I have the Refined Human mentality.” When you feel comfortable inside the Refined Human Body, place your mind gently inside the sphere at the center of the refined human body. Focus on the pinpoint of bright light at the center of the center. The center expands itself and you see your Celestial Body.

For those who reach this state of mind, go on with the same procedure. As larger and larger, more and more radiant bodies appear, become each more refined body, one-by-one, until you reach *Dhammakāya*. *Dhammakāya* looks like a transparent Buddha statue – very radiant, very pure! The Buddha statue, sitting cross-legged, is about 9 meters in height and width. Become *Dhammakāya* fully, right away.

And now, let us share all of the merit that we have made in this meditation and previously – together with all of our loving kindness – with all beings everywhere through-

out the universe. We share with our parents, our grandparents, our family, our teachers and our friends. We share with our King and our Queen and the whole royal family. May Lord Buddha bless all of us to lead a peaceful, happy life, free from suffering, free from problems and free from enmity. And may this meditation help to bring us closer to transcendence and Nirvana.

[Pause.]

And, now, we come slowly out of meditation and open the eyes.

Interviewer: Thank you very much, Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith. We reverently appreciate your excellent meditation instruction.

Phra Rajyanvisith: May Lord Buddha bless all of you. We would like to invite you all to join us for meditation at Wat Luang Phor Sodh, any Sunday. Our bus leaves from Wat Saket, the Golden Mountain Temple, at seven o'clock every Sunday morning. I lead morning chanting and meditation for all, beginning at nine thirty, and Phra Bart conducts an afternoon meditation session in English from twelve to two P.M. Please come join us. Please see our English websites at "www.dhammacenter.org" or "www.meditationpark.org" or our Thai website at "dhammakaya.org."

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In sum, this volume has reiterated and expanded upon Lord Buddha's simplest, but most crucially important precept: **Do Good!** In the *Ovāda Pāṭimokkha*, Lord Buddha summarized the teachings as: Avoid Evil; Do Good; and Purify the Mind. The essence of our reality is the Law of Karma (*Kamma*): Do good; Get good; Do Evil; Get Evil. Being careful to do good and avoid evil not only steers clear of the slippery descent into hell, but also builds the foundation for the ascent to higher planes. We may have heard the Five Precepts, but few have heard the enumeration of punishments and rewards presented here.

Dāna or selfless generosity, introduced in Chapter Two, reflects the essence of Divine Abode mentality (*Brahma Vihāra*) – Loving Kindness (*Mettā*), Compassion (*Karuṇā*), Sympathetic Joy (*Muditā*) and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*) – which underlies all moral behavior. Regular *Dāna*, given to human beings who practice morality (*Sīla*)

and meditation (*Bhāvana*) produces rewards lasting over 100,000 lifetimes, and *Paramatta Dāna* – being ready to give up one’s life or family – produces rewards that last indefinitely.

Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith’s elaboration on the Five Precepts brings similar insights. Killing may result in a blood feud over many lifetimes. Others are killed in return and reborn in hell for a very, very long time. When finally reborn as a humans, they have very short lifetimes and are often ill or meet with disasters and become lame, lose a limb, or are killed again. Others commit suicide. When reborn, they may die in the womb. This is the Law of Karma.

Not stealing is refraining from taking that which is not given. It also includes avoiding cheating and corruption which are prevalent. Most important is abstaining from improper livelihood which engages one in harmful activities on a daily basis.

Uncontrolled lust leads to profound problems in family life such as broken homes. Children are born out-of-wedlock or suffer psychological problems, growing up as disobedient delinquents following the parents’ example. This is very much what we see in our present social reality.

Those who have committed adultery are reborn in Hell or as hungry ghosts or in the animal world for a long

time. After eventually returning to the human world, the remaining karma results in becoming a prostitute for up to 100 lifetimes., One may also be a homosexual or sterile female for many lifetimes. Next, that person becomes a normal woman, but anytime that woman commits adultery during this long process, the process starts over again. If she is loyal to her husband, she will be reborn as a man.

Avoiding improper speech means not lying, using harsh language avoiding divisive speech, and useless speech such as gossiping. It earns an unreliable reputation which will leave one with fewer and fewer friends, and loving partners the lower classes of society with dishonor. After death, one is reborn in Hell for a very long time. Eventually, one returns to the human world, but has a very, very bad smelling mouth.

Finally, refraining from intoxicants is, perhaps, the most important precept. When mindfulness is dulled, one may also break all other Precepts. Addiction to intoxicants causes rapid deterioration of both physical and mental health. Addiction also leads to catastrophic social consequences such as loss of employment, marital separation and divorce, and potentially homelessness. Societies worldwide have accepted drinking alcohol as normal, and it is everywhere incorporated into social ceremonies. This abets addiction and contributes to myriad social defects.

Good intentions are the opposites of the three root passions – greed, hatred, and delusion. They are selfless generosity; loving-kindness and compassion; and Right Intentions. There are three components of Right Intentions: Renunciation, Absence of ill will, which implies Loving Kindness; and Non-violence. Right Intentions are developed and maintained through continual mindfulness to control the passions and foster wholesome intentions, speech, and action. These are achieved through accumulation of ten Factors of Perfection or *Pāramī*. The first step is practicing generosity or *Dāna*. The second step is following the Five Precepts. *Vipassanā* meditation also helps by developing wisdom.

Personal development is individual improvement of one’s own behavior and mental processes through careful control of actions, words, thoughts and intentions. In accordance with the Law of Karma, we can maximize happiness and minimize suffering by improving our own conduct.

There are four virtues conducive to immediate personal development in the present lifetime: Diligence (*Uṭṭhāna-sampadā*); Vigilance (*Ārakkha-sampadā*); Virtuous Associates (*Kalyāṇamittatā*); and Thrift (*Samajīvitā*). Properly applied, these build a powerful foundation of knowledge and experience, foster one’s career, and protect one’s property and reputation, avoiding the “Road to Ruin”

and developing stable relationships with those who can provide sage advice and material support. It is very similar to what our King has promulgated as “Sufficiency Economy.”

Finally, Chapter Seven considers Future Development or virtues leading to profitable rebirths. Lord Buddha cited four current virtues that promote future spiritual welfare. They are: Faith or confidence (*Saddhā-sampadā*); Morality (*Sīla-sampadā*); Generosity or sacrifice (*Cāga-sampadā*); and Wisdom (*Paññā-sampadā*).

Morality is doing good. It results in both mundane and spiritual rewards, sooner or later, more or less. Good intentions lead to peaceful, orderly speech and actions and then to concentration and wisdom which ultimately culminate in transcendence and insight. The quality of reincarnation after death depends on the mixture of good and bad conduct one has done in this lifetime. Thus, mindful day-to-day living based on good intentions will foster extremely important spiritual benefits later on.

In conclusion, this entire issue has been devoted to the most basic teaching of all: **Do Good!** Nothing else in this life is more important. Be alert and attentive every instant of every day, always asking yourself am I doing good? Am I doing the right thing? Doing good will bring immediate benefits in this lifetime here and now, but, even more importantly, it will lead to a good rebirth for your next life.

This broadcast series continues. Volume Four is on the way. These talks are aired on the first Sunday of every month at 8:00 AM, Bangkok Time (GMT+7:00), over four frequencies of the Thai National Broadcasting System: FM 88, FM 95.5, FM 107, and AM 918. We hope you can join us. Sound tracks and transcripts of the broadcasts with their meditations can be downloaded from Wat Luang Phor Sodh's English-language website at "www.dhammadcenter.org" or our Thai website at "dhammakaya.org." Please email any questions to bmi@dhammadcenter.org.

Phra Khru Baitika Dr. Barton Yanathiro

Interviewer

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Dr. Phra Rajyanvisith

Abbot, Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakāyārām

Meditation Master, Buddhist Scholar & Educator

Appendix A

THE AUTHOR: DR. PHRA RAJYANVISITH

Meditation Master, Buddhist Scholar & Educator

1. Abbot, Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakāyārām (July 9, 1991)
2. President of the Executive Committee, National Coordination Center of Provincial Meditation Institutes of Thailand (Elected by the Directors of Provincial Meditation Institutes from throughout the country at a Seminar and Practicum organized by the National Buddhist Office 23-25 April 2008 at Wat Yanawa, Bangkok, Thailand and recognized by the Sangha Body)
3. Director and Principal-Meditation Master, Wat Luang Phor Sodh Buddhist Meditation Institute (Since 2006) *An Associated Institution of the World Buddhist University*
4. Vice-chairman of the Administrative Committee, Mahachulalongkorn-rajabhidyalaya University Region 15 Academic Services Center (November 19, 2007)
5. Director, Dhammakāya Buddhist Meditation Institute (1981)
6. Manager, Rajburi Provincial Pali Studies Center (Appointed by the Sangha Body, October 20, 1999)
7. Director, Rajburi Provincial Meditation Practice Center (Appointed by the Sangha Body, March 6, 2001)
8. Director, Center for Development of Virtues and Ethics for the Security of the Nation, Religion and Monarchy (2009)

Profile as a Monk

Name:	Phra Rajyanvisith (Phra Ajahn Maha Sermchai Jayamanggalo) Abbot of Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakāyārām, and Director of Dhammakaya Buddhist Meditation Institute
Date of Birth:	March 6, 1929.
Entered Monkhood:	March 6, 1986.
Buddhist Dhamma:	Completed grade three of Buddhist Theory, and grade six of Pali studies.
Meditation Master:	Venerable Phra Rajbrahma-Thera, Deputy Abbot, Meditation master, Wat Paknam
Meditation Experience:	Practiced Buddhist meditation since 1970.
Preceptorship:	Appointed since January 31, 1996.

Ecclesiastical Title

from December 5, 1998: Phra Bhavanavisutthikhun

Ecclesiastical Title

from December 5, 2004: Phra Rajyanvisith

An honorary Doctorate in Buddhist Principles in Management from Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in 2007.

An honorary Doctorate in Religious Study in Buddhism from Mahamakut Buddhist University in 2009.

Profile before Monkhood

Work: Research specialist, United States Information Services (USIS), Bangkok.

Visiting lecturer in research methodology, research and evaluation, and public opinion surveys to various academic institutions (Thammasart University, Bangkok University, etc.)

Academic Qualifications: Certificate in accountancy, Bachelors of Commerce, and Masters of Arts in public administration (Honors), Thammasart University.

Certificate in social science research, Institute of Social Research, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

Certificate in Wang OIS Management Courses, organized by USIS, Washington DC, USA.



Phra Mongkol Thepmuni (Sodh Candasaro)

The Late Abbot of Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen

Appendix B

BIOGRAPHY OF THE VENERABLE CHAO KHUN PHRA MONGKOL-THEPMUNI (Sodh Candasaro)

The Late Abbot of Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen

The master of the *Vijjā Dhammakāya* approach, the late Abbot of Wat Paknam, the Venerable Chao Khun Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni, is fondly known and revered throughout the land as Luang Phor Wat Paknam, or simply as “Luang Phor Yai,” meaning senior father or meditation master.

Luang Phor was born October 10, 1884 (BE 2427) to a humble rice-merchant family of Supanburi Province as Sodh, the second child of Nai Ngern and Nang Sudjai Meekaewnoi. As was typical in those days, young Sodh received his education from the temples. At fourteen, when his father died, he became the chief breadwinner for the family. Successful as he was in rice trading, at age nineteen the compassionate young man resolved to become a monk (*Bhikkhu*) for life.

Having made arrangements to ensure his mother’s welfare, the young man entered monkhood three years later, in July 1906 (BE 2449). At the age of twenty-two, he was ordained as Candasaro Bhikkhu at Wat Songpeenong, near

his home. Phra Ajahn Dee of Wat Pratusarn, Supanburi, was his main Preceptor.

The day after his ordination, Candasaro Bhikkhu began meditation practice and study of Pali scriptures in search of deeper and wider knowledge, he moved from Wat Songpeenong to Wat Bodhi (Wat Phra Chetupon Vimomangkalaram) in Bangkok. There, he frequented the centers of meditation practice and Pali study.

Soon, Luang Phor was recognized by his teachers, Phra Khru Yanavirati (Po) of Wat Bodhi and Phra Ajahn Singha of Wat Lakorn Tham, as an accomplished meditation instructor.

During those early dry seasons, Luang Phor adopted *Dhutangavatra*, the Austere Practices for Purification such as wandering in solitude through the forest wilderness, staying in caves and practicing the *Dhamma* with piety.

After ten years, Luang Phor set aside his informal study of the Pali Scriptures, having reached sufficiency to read the *Mahā-Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. Thereafter he devoted himself totally to meditation practice.

Luang Phor spent the next Buddhist Lent at Wat Bang Khoo Vieng, on Bangkok Noi Canal, where his benefactor, Phra Ajahn Choom, was the abbot. There, at nightfall on the

full-moon day of September, in his twelfth year as a *Bhikkhu*, Luang Phor prepared himself for meditation in the *uposatha*. He invoked illumination and guidance, and made a vow dedicating his life to Buddhism. Luang Phor vowed not to rise from his seat in front of the Buddha statue until he was permitted to attain some understanding of the *Dhamma* as discerned by the Buddha.

With his mind set and its components of vision, memory, thought and cognition all at rest at the center of his body, two “Anguli” (joints of the middle finger) above the navel, Luang Phor was able to penetrate the full depths of the *Dhamma* as it was revealed to and by the Buddha. That revelation of the Dhamma and ever more refined *Dhammakāyas* (Dhamma bodies) was so profound that it was only possible when the mind was at rest at the body’s center. After lent, Luang Phor went to teach at Wat Bang Pla, where three monks and four laymen who followed his meditation procedure were also able to attain various degrees of insight. Thereafter, Luang Phor gradually became renowned throughout the land.

Somdej Phra Vanarat, Head of Bhasicharoen Sangha District, spotted Luang Phor’s potential and requested him to assume the Abbotship of Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen. This was a neglected and deteriorating monastery erected five centuries earlier. Luang Phor wanted to decline this request,

but he could not. With utmost patience and remarkable leadership, Luang Phor gradually rebuilt the monastery until it is today one of the largest and most important monasteries in the land. In 1949 (BE 2492), Luang Phor received the ecclesiastical rank of Phra Bhavana-Kosolthera. This was followed by the title Phra Mongkol-Rajmuni, and in 1957 (BE 2500) by the title Phra Mongkol-Thepmuni.

Vijjā Dhammakāya, the revelation of the *Dhamma* as attained by Luang Phor, was the heart of his teaching. His service to Buddhism can be seen from his regular routine:

- Meditating day and night with *Bhikkhus* and *Upāsikās* in different sessions.
- Leading *Bhikkhus* and *Sāmaṇeras* in the uposatha every morning and evening, paying homage to the *Triple Gems* and ending with a sermon.
- Teaching public meditation practice every Thursday at 2:00 pm.
- Delivering public sermons on holy days (*Uposatha* or *Wan Phra*) and Sundays.
- Supervising the Pali Institute.

Thus, Luang Phor devoted his time and effort almost exclusively to teaching meditation. His disciples multiplied into the thousands. It was not uncommon for revered *bhikkhus* in far corners of the country, who apparently never met Luang Phor, to know him well and to respect him as their mentor.

His decease at the age of 75, on February 3, 1959 (BE 2502) was just a pause for the immortal master. His life should serve to remind other mortals to pursue their own obligations to the *Noble Path* carefully. Luang Phor's teachings live on, manifesting the *Ultimate Righteous Truth*.

*Written by Phra Bhavana-Kosolthera
Veera Ganuttamo (Now Phrarajbrahmathera)*

Appendix C

HISTORY OF WAT LUANG PHOR SODH

Damnoen Saduak District, Rajburi Province

1. Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakāyārām

Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakāyārām Temple is located on the beautifully landscaped campus of the Dhammakaya Buddhist Meditation Institute at kilometer 14 of the Damnoen Saduak - Bangpae Road, in Damnoen Saduak District of Rajburi Province, 93 kilometers from Bangkok. It encompasses 244 rais. The 74 rais surrounding the main monastery were registered in 1991 as Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakayaram, in loving memory of Luang Phor Wat Paknam, Phra Mongkol Thepmuni (Sodh Candasaro). Here is a brief Profile:

Address: 109 Moo 7 Damnoen Saduak - Bangpae Road,
Damnoen Saduak District, Rajburi Province,
70130.

Phone: (032) 745-180, Extension 220/191

Fax: (032) 745-170

Websites: www.dhammadcenter.org

Email: bmi@dhammadcenter.org

2. Dhammakaya Buddhist Meditation Institute



1. President

His Holiness Somdej Phra Buddhajahn: Abbot, Wat Sakesa, Sangha Council & Chairman, Acting Sangharaja Committee.

2. Vice-President

His Holiness Somdej Phra Mahā Ratchamangkalajahn: Abbot, Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen & Sangha Council Member.



3. General Manager and Meditation Master

Phra Rajyanvisith: Abbot, Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakayaram & Coordinator, Provincial Meditation Institutes.

4. Financial and Property Management

Dhammakaya Buddhist Meditation Foundation.

3. Founding

- 21 May 1991 Registered as a Wat by the Ministry of Education and recognized by the Sangha body
- 2 May 1992 Consecrated as a Temple by His Holiness Somdej Phra Buddhaghosajahn, Former Abbot of Wat Sampaya, Bangkok, and Sangha Council Member.

4. Recognized Excellence

- 1999 Recognized by the Sangha Body as Rajburi Provincial Pali Studies Center.
- 2004 Recognized by the Sangha Body as Rajburi Provincial Meditation Institute.
- 2005 Designated by the Sangha Body as an “Exemplary Development Temple with Noteworthy Success.”
- 2006 Established as Sangha Ecclesiastical Region 15 Academic Services Unit for Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (for four provinces).

- 2006 Wat Luang Phor Sodh Buddhist Meditation Institute established as an Associated Institution of the World Buddhist University.
- 2008 Elected the National Coordination Center of Provincial Meditation Institutes of Thailand.
- 2009 Established by the Sangha Body as the Center for Development of Virtues and Ethics for the Security of the Nation, Religion and Monarchy

5. Objectives

1. To help humans rid themselves of suffering and penetrate *Nibbāna*.
2. To educate laity and monks to become knowledgeable, virtuous instructors spreading Lord Buddha's teachings.
3. To become a center of virtue supporting peace for all world beings.

4. To become a pilgrimage center for the faithful:
 - Displaying sacred objects worthy of veneration.
 - Providing a clean, beautiful, serene environment for peaceful meditation and introspection.
5. To faultlessly manage and preserve the sacred treasures and offerings of the faithful.

6. Buildings and Grounds



1. The Ubosota Hall is a three-story building located on its own island, surrounded by trees. Like most Wat Luang Phor Sodh buildings, it is all white, with a white roof to indicate purity. Designed by the king's architect in the late Ayuthaya style, it won the award for Outstanding Preservation of Architecture in 1996.

The building features Buddha Relics and over forty Buddha images made of semi-precious gemstones or valuable metals, located at the front of the main assembly hall on the third floor. The second floor displays a large plaque listing major donors. The first floor, which can hold ap-

proximately one hundred people, has the history and rules of the wat displayed on the wall. Surrounding the main assembly hall are six small viharas or chapels, three on each side. The two middle viharas contain rare Buddha images and an image of Luang Phor Sodh. The others are used for breakout meditation groups.

2. The Information Center, situated at the central fork as the first building to receive visitors, is a white two-story enclosed pavilion with an extremely steep white roof. Its main Buddha image is in blessing position. There is also an image of Luang Phor Sodh where the laity can pay homage.



Originally, this was a multipurpose hall for all temple activities. It has now become a museum filled with Buddha relics, Buddha statues, and related displays.

3. The Vihara of Luang Phor Sodh is located at the center of its own sacred island right by the central fork. It is surrounded by rare trees with historical significance for Buddhism. There are two images of Luang Phor Sodh, a large, ferocious standing image and a relatively small, approachable sitting statue that devotees love to honor with gold leaf and offerings.



4. The Two Twin School Buildings are three-stories high and constructed of red brick. They are located at the back, left of the campus, by the Dining Hall. These buildings get heavy use. Monks study Dhamma and Pali for the national exams.

For Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, the wat teaches Bachelors and Masters Degree programs in Buddhism. The buildings also service a continual stream of grade school and high school students coming for brief retreats. Most popular is the library with its internet connection.

5. Sala Somdej Dining Hall is a three-story white building which can serve up to 500 monks and novices on the second level.



The first level provides both dining hall and sleeping quarters for large numbers of Laity. The top floor is an assembly hall for up to 500 persons, used for morning and evening chanting, Sunday Dhamma practice, and major special events.



6. The Meditation Vihara, located in the lake, near the Abbot's residence, is the wat's most beautiful building. Four equal wings join in sweeping upward curves into a tall central tower with an onion-shaped cap. Inside, one wing is devoted to Buddha statues and another to Buddha relics.



The remainder seats about 130 meditators sitting cross-legged. Accessible from both banks of the lake by two bridges, the hall is occupied twenty-four hours a day by shifts of advanced meditators cultivating world peace. It is open on weekends for visitors to pay homage to the large golden Buddha statue and Buddha Relics.

7. **Phra Maha Cetiya Somdej**, under construction, will be a huge, four-story cetiya-shaped pilgrimage and conference center displaying the wat's exceptional collection of Buddha relics. Four wings and connecting stairways come together to form a jediya shape.



A Sample of Buddha Relic at Wat Luang Phor Sodh

The first floor will provide space for up to 2,000 lay persons to attend conferences or meditate. It will also contain the administrative offices. The second floor will provide space for up to 2,000 monks to meditate. The third floor will be a museum exhibiting Buddha statues demonstrating all the various poses as well as samples of meditation practices. The smaller fourth floor at the neck of the cetiya is where the Buddha Relics will be displayed.

**Some Bodhi Trees at Wat Luang Phor Sodh
under which various Buddhas
have become enlightened**



Sri Mahābodhi Tree

Lord Buddha, *Samaṇa Gotama*



Neem Tree

Lord Buddha, *Sumedha*



Ebenaceae Tree

Lord Buddha, *Dhammadassī*



Dita Bark

Lord Buddha, *Taṇhankara*



8. Finally, the grounds of the wat and institute campus are noteworthy in themselves. The first five years of site development were devoted to constructing the lake, rivers, forests and islands and planting rare and special trees from around the world. This effort won a royal award for turning the worn-out rice land back to nature. Most of the trees under which various Buddhas have become enlightened are represented.

7. Programs in Thai and English

The Wat conducts numerous educational programs on meditation and scripture study in both Thai and English, as follows:

1. Programs in Thai

1. **Sunday Dhamma Practice:** Wat bus leaves Wat Saket, Bangkok, at 07:00 and returns about 16:00.
2. **Workshops:** 3, 5, 7, or 10-day meditation-Dhamma study workshops for various lay groups – students, teachers, government officials, state enterprise/private business personnel, etc., (year-round except during the rainy-season), train over 20,000 participants per year.
3. **Retreats:** Two semi-annual retreats for hundreds of laity and monks, May and December 1-14, since 1982.
4. **Vipassanā Teacher Training:** Two-week courses for meditation masters.
5. **Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University:** Pre-university studies for Monks in Region 15, BA in Buddhist Studies, MA in Buddhist Administration.

6. **Dhamma Studies School:** Three month preparation for National Dhamma Exams (Nakdhamma 3, 2, 1).
7. **Pali Studies School:** Three month preparation for national Pali exams in grammar and levels 1-9.
8. **Radio Broadcasts:** Lecture on Dhamma (Mostly) every 3rd Sunday of every other month at 08.00 - 08.30 AM. on National Broadcasting Station of Thailand; Own FM radio station plus weekly and monthly national and international Dhamma Talks in Thai.
9. **TV Broadcasts:** Every 1st. and 3rd Sunday of the month at 05:30 on Modern 9 TV; every morning at 05.00 - 06.00 AM. on D- Station.
10. **Publications:** Over 50 books, numerous pamphlets, and a monthly journal in Thai.
11. **Ordination for Monks:** Ordinations most Saturdays plus special group ordinations.
12. **Ordination for Novices:** Two-week “Hot Season” Novices Program.
13. **Special Ceremonies:** Four major Buddhist holidays plus Dhammakāya holidays plus special events.

14. **24-hour Meditation for World Peace** Continual advanced meditation in shifts around the clock. New Meditation Vihara in the lake now in service.
15. **Pilgrimage Center:** Now building Phra Maha Jetiya Somdej to display the Wat's exceptional collection of Buddha relics. (See Appendix F.)
16. **Center for making merit:** The wat is offering very sacred Buddha statues as "Thank you" for major donations for Jetiya construction, some donated by celestial beings.
17. **Website:** Dhamma & meditation in Thai on *www.dhammadakaya.org*.

2. Programs in English

1. **Meditation Guidance:** Year-round, semi-private meditation guidance in English, which has proved astoundingly effective. Come anytime and stay as long as you like.
2. **Retreats:** Three intensive retreats May 1-14, August 1-14, and December 1-14.

- 3. Meditation Online:** Meditation guidance, Q&A interaction, forums, and downloadable meditations at *www.meditationpark.org*.
- 4. Website:** Buddhist Meditation Institute (An Associated Institution of the World Buddhist University) at *www.dhammacenter.org*.
- 5. Radio Broadcasts:** Monthly Dhamma Talks over National Broadcasting Service of Thailand – 08:00 on the first Sunday of each month on FM88, FM95.5, FM107, and AM918. Downloadable from websites and published every six months.



Appendix D

INTERNATIONAL MEDITATION

by Wat Luang Phor Sodh
Buddhist Meditation Institute



Wat Luang Phor Sodh Buddhist Meditation Institute

*An Associated Institution of
the World Buddhist University*

Wat Luang Phor Sodh Buddhist Meditation Institute, an Associated Institution of the World Buddhist University, teaches Concentration-Insight Meditation (*Samadha-Vipassanā*), which has proved astoundingly effective. Meditation proceeds to successively higher levels by always focusing at the center of the center.



1. Meditation Guidance



BMI offers Meditation Guidance or semi-private tutoring in English all year round, starting whenever you choose and lasting as long as you like. If you have the time, please try to come for 10 days to two weeks, for maximum payoff. It generally requires 5-7 days to develop the inner calm necessary for rapid progress. But, individuals vary greatly, so all are welcome for either longer or briefer periods.



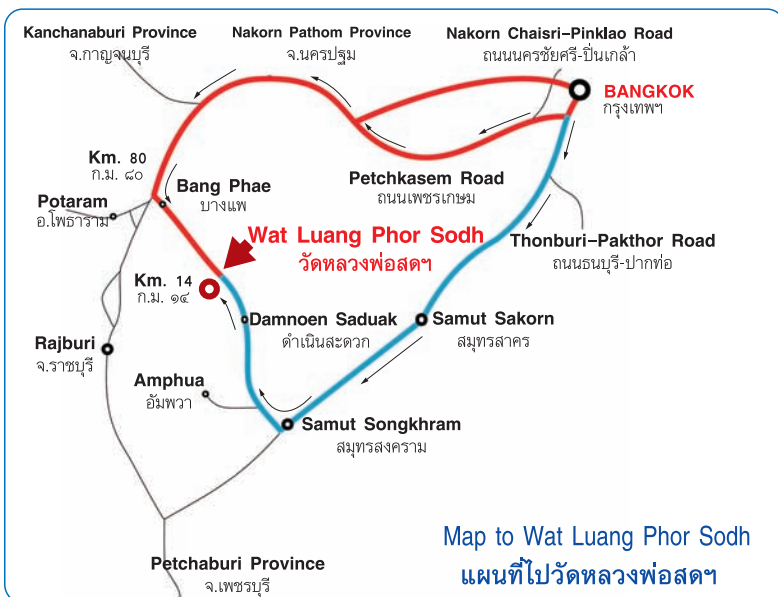
2. Meditation Retreats

BMI offers three intensive retreats per year, May 1-14, August 1-14, and December 1-14. Retreats are similar to guided meditation, but more intensive, with a sunrise meditation at 05:30. They usually involve 20-50 international meditators. Several hundred monks and laity attend the Thai retreat simultaneously in May and December. During retreats there is more access to the venerable Meditation Master in joint Thai-English sessions. This is especially useful for those who become advanced. There is also more chance to study Buddhist practices, Vinaya, Dhamma and Chanting. The large number of participants necessarily implies less silence.

3. Contact

Please see our website www.dhammacenter.org, where you can register online or **email** us at bmi@dhammacenter.org or call Phra Bart at (+66) 089-068-0521 or Phra Bill at (+66) 086-364-8808.

Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakāyārām is 2 hours southwest of Bangkok by #78 air-conditioned bus, which leaves from the left-hand sidewalk outside the Southern Bus Terminal, every 20 minutes 06:00-19:00. **Do not look for the bus inside the station and Do Not Take Any Other Bus!!!** Look for the bus in stall #1 or by the large blue sign in English towards the back of the sidewalk which says “No. 78 Damnoen Saduak, FLOATING MARKET.”



Tributes from Meditators Around the World

- **Rianne, Holland:** Extremely valuable; once in a lifetime opportunity! I will take this with me back home and enjoy Buddhism the rest of my life.
- **Pablo, Chile:** Extremely valuable; made me feel one with the world. I feel love, peaceful love for everything and everybody.
- **Lieke, Holland:** This trip has been the best thing I've ever done in my life, and the things I've learned and seen out of meditation are a very important part of it. I want to thank you so much. Never in this life will I forget about this experience, and I will definitely continue meditating at home.
- **Richard, USA:** Extremely valuable; this all too short time, none-the-less did give me an entirely new awareness of an inner world of richness and resourcefulness that wants to be known and welcomed into conscious awareness.
- **Roosmarijn, Holland:** Very valuable; my meditation studies showed me a new world and that I was capable to get there – that was more than I expected.
- **Rachel, Canada:** Extremely valuable. As we say, I “straightened my head out” ...many illusions, veils were lifted and things were sorted out ... I realized a new way to live that I had really known all along.

- **Niels, Holland:** Extremely valuable. It let me put life in a much bigger perspective than I've ever seen it in before. It showed me what's really important in life. And, it definitely encouraged me to live in a more altruistic way. (*Niels's mother was so impressed with his meditation that she also came with her friend, and both meditated to experiencing Nirvana.*)
- **Anke, Germany:** Extremely valuable. In Nirvana I was overwhelmed. I knew I don't have to doubt any more. Whatever I've seen and felt was real. I never meditated before and achieved quite much in such a short time. (*She declared herself a follower of the Buddha.*)
- **Andrew, USA:** I didn't know much about Buddhism and wasn't sure what to expect. I tried to keep an open mind and couldn't have followed a better approach. I was able to purify myself mentally and spiritually. The environment of the wat emanates peace and contentment. The monks were some of the most peaceful, respectful people I have ever met and led by example rather than proselytizing. Phra Bart guided us with patience and a sense of humor. All in all, it's hard to think of a time better spent. I have become a more confident, clear-thinking person. I encourage anyone out there to give the Meditation Institute a try.

- **Steve, Singapore**: Extremely valuable! In Nirvana I saw Lord Buddha. In Heaven I felt very peaceful. In Hell I saw my grandpa. You can really experience things that you cannot see with the eye. It is very peaceful when you are in Nirvana.
- **Judith, Holland**: Very Valuable! In Heaven I saw celestials living on clouds and a mountain and felt peace and lightness. I've made a big step from no experience. Now I know I'm on the right way. I did not ever expect to be able to feel so calm and peaceful and happy while meditating, but also afterwards.
- **Teddi, USA**: Extremely valuable! In Nirvana I felt completely weightless, at peace and stillness. I reached a level of peace and stillness that I never had before. I'm not sure exactly what happened, but it was the most beautiful experience of my life. This is a wonderful program. Everyone was very kind and patient. The food was great! Just keep doing what you are doing!

